

LATROBE VALLEY FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB.

President: Mr. Ken Eldridge,
39 Lafayette Street,
TRARALGON.

Morwell.

October, 1963.

Secretary: Mr. S. Belgraver,
179 Lloyd Street,
MOE.

Dear Fellow Field Naturalists,

This is the first issue of a News-letter, which your Executive Committee hopes to provide monthly, with the object of keeping members informed of Club activities - of what has happened, of what is proposed for the future, and, where possible, to include matters of interest to members.

It is intended to make the news-letter as informative as possible, and to use it, as far as possible, as a means of keeping the business time of the regular meetings of the Club to a minimum.

It is hoped that future issues will bear the emblem of the Club, the "Flying Duck" Orchid, described by Miss Jean GALBRAITH, as CALEANA MAJOR. This is usually found in sandy soil, flowers from October to December, and is widespread in the Latrobe Valley heath lands. The "Flying Duck" Orchid has a large lip with an excellent likeness to the head of a duck, which is sensitive and snaps into the "body" when touched.

Meeting of the Club at Traralgon on 25th September, arranged and described by Mr. Ken Eldridge.

A coloured film entitled "The Alder Wood Wasp and its Insect Enemies" was shown at the meeting of the Club on the 25th September, 1963. Sixty-one people, including about thirty members of the Institute of Foresters of Australia, Gippsland Branch, attended. The film showed the life cycle of an English Wasp which is closely related to the Sirex Wasp found in Gippsland pine trees. The film also showed the life cycle of four parasitic wasps which develop on the eggs or larvae inside the alder tree. Alder is a close relative of birch.

Another film, "Destruction on the Wing" showed the damage done by Sirex in Tasmania and quarantine measures on the Australian waterfront.

A fine colour film, "Biological Control of Insects" by C.S.I.R.O., was also shown. It showed the successful introduction of insect parasites to control cabbage moth, green vegetable bug, Queensland fruit fly, and several others.

Mr. G. McIntyre, the Forester-in-Charge of the Forests' Commission's Sirex eradication in Gippsland told of the search for Sirex infested pine trees in one million acres of country.

Morwell High School student, Michael Aäter, showed his display on the Sirex Wasp which won a prize in the recent Science Talent search.

EXCURSION TO LIME PIT ROAD AND SELDOM SEEN ROAD, NEAR ROSEDALE, 28TH SEPTEMBER, 1963
Description by Miss J. Galbraith, who led the excursion.

The many members and their families who made a first stop at the Rosedale Shire's Wildflower Sanctuary on Limepit Road, enjoyed the rich and beautiful flora of the roadside, and were impressed by the luxuriance of the growth and flowering - especially in the netted part of the sanctuary. Many expressed appreciation of the Council's foresight in preserving this sample of some of the best wildflower country in Gippsland.

It was too late for the best flowering of Heath, Correa and Wattles (though all were still in bloom) and too early for the flowers of the Blue Dampiera and the rare Rush-lily, but many other species were in full bloom, including two rare species - Golden Grevillea, and the Gippsland form of Rough Mint-bush.

The pink flowers of Sticky Boronia; the mauve of Pink-bell; gold of Twiggy Guinea flower, and the pink and white of Pink Beard-heath, as well as many other species, filled the enclosure with colour, and any open spaces were dotted with the bright mauve stars of Waxlip Orchids.

As well as these species, plants of the Rush-lily were seen outside the A.P.M. Forests' experimental plot on the way to the sand-pit, which provided parking and picnicing space at lunchtime, and where there was an opportunity to catch up on plant identifications.

Only one notable addition to the plants seen was recorded on the Seldom Seen Road between Limepit and Longford. This was a flowering group of Red-beak Orchids.

During the stop for afternoon tea on the edge of the Longford Pine Forest, the President drew attention to the relative volume of timber produced per acre in the pine forests and the scrubby eucalypt forest of this very poor land. The production from trees over ten years old is up to twenty times that of the indigenous forest.

Most members went straight home from Longford, but a few enthusiasts visited a patch of orchids found by Mr. Peterson on the Jeeralang North Road. Here there was a beautiful flowering of many plants not seen earlier in the day, and leaves or flowers of fourteen species of orchids (including six species of Greenhoods in flower) were seen.

About seventy species of plants (Sixty-four now in the Sanctuary) were seen south of Rosedale, and sixty five south of Traralgon. The latter are nearly all different species from those seen at Rosedale, because of the different soil and rainfall.

Addendum by the "Scribe".

During lunch at the sandpit, some members made an interesting "find" in a heap of quarried limestone, apparently dumped on the way to the Traralgon Cement Works. This consisted of stone rich in marine fossil remains of which some interesting specimens were obtained.

Sherbon Hills explains in his "The Physiography of Victoria" that "From Orbost to Stradbroke the East Gippsland plains are underlain by marine CAINOZOIC sediments which are overlain for the most part with fluviatile sands and gravels".

Meeting of the Executive Committee. This was held on Monday the 14th October, and will be reported upon at the next meeting.

The Next Excursion. On Saturday, 26th October, 1963, to the Macalister River. The leader, Mr. Cane of Maffra, has an unusual knowledge of the plants here, and apart from the interesting flora, the route has definite scenic attractions.

Times and Places of meeting for the Excursion.

At 11.00 a.m. at the more northern of the two railway crossings at Heyfield.

Moe P. O.	9.15 a.m.
Yallourn P. O.	9.30 a.m.
Morwell P.O.	9.45 a.m.
Traralgon (Opp. Methodist Church)	10.00 a.m.

Date and Place of Next Meeting.

At 8.00 p.m. on Wednesday, ^{27 November} ~~23rd October~~ at the North Morwell High School

Speaker	Miss Ina Watson
Subject	Bird Life

This will be illustrated by Miss Watson's outstandingly beautiful slides.

LATROBE VALLEY FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB.

MORWELL.

President

Mr. K. Eldridge,
39 Lafayette Street,
TRARALGON

VICTORIA.

November, 1963 - Issue No. 2.

Secretary

Mr. S. Belgraver,
179 Lloyd Street,
MOE.

Dear Fellow Field Naturalists',

General Meeting of the Club held Wednesday, 23rd October, 1963.
(by the Secretary, Mr. Belgraver).

The meeting was advised about the picking of Wildflowers. As it is the aim of our Club to preserve nature, the smallest spray should be picked only if needed for identification, or for a collection.

A substantial number of suggestions were put forward concerning next year's meetings and excursion program. More suggestions for lectures would be welcome.

Because of a bereavement in his family, Mr. A. T. H. Adams could not be present to show his slides. Instead Mr. J. Peterson showed a nice arrangement of the slides he made when visiting the Flinders Ranges, in South Australia, some weeks ago. Included were beautiful scenes, a wide variety of plant life and some aboriginal drawings on rock. The screening was much appreciated by members.

Excursion to Burgoyne's Gap. (above the MacAlister) Saturday, 26th October.

(Translated from notes taken by Mrs. F. M. Kinniburgh and Mrs. J. Peterson, by Mr. J. Peterson.)

After a certain amount of luggage movement, all-comers found room in the various vehicles, reaching the rendezvous at 11 a.m. sharp. Here excursion leader Mr. Bill Cane joined the party, and nine cars moved off. The first stop was just before Glenmaggie, where our attention was drawn to plants of *Prostanthera* (Mint Bushes, etc.), and *Davesia corymbosa* ?, growing in very unnatural surroundings among the nodding blue lilies (*Stypandra glauca*), no doubt where seed from logging trucks had been dropped.

Further on a stop was made by the pioneer grave of "Saffon", on Blanket Hill. During this short stop the variety of trees was noted. These included Red and White Stringy Bark, Butt Butt, Red and Yellow Box, and Ironbark.

Another stop was made where specimen of the *Goodenia Grandiflora* McMillan variety were seen. This plant grows only in this particular spot.

Shortly after passing McMillan's Lookout, lunch was partaken on the banks of the MacAllister River, at the bridge over the River. Our final stop was at Burgoyne's Gap. Here the cars were left, young and old (?) scrambling about the hills. Very striking was the scent of the *Daphne Heath* (*Brachyloma daphnoides*). Orchids and wildflowers grew in profusion. The Orchids included the Waxlip (*Glossodia Major*), and Musk *Caladenia* (*Caladenia angustata*), Pink Fingers (*Caladenia carnea*), Brown Beard (*Calochilus Robertsonii*), Tiger Orchid (*Diuris sulphurea*), the lovely Flying Duck (*Caleana major*), and two, Greenhoods (*Pterostylis pusilla*), and the Swan Greenhood (*P. Cycnocephala*).

It was a pleasure to learn that part of this area has been made a Wildflower Reserve, largely for the conservation of the unusually red variety of the normally white Bitter *Cryptandra* (*Cryptandra amura*), which grows at this spot.

A very informative and enjoyable day was had by all as was most aptly expressed by Mr. Scanlan in his vote of thanks to excursion Leader Mr. Cane. Shortly after all headed for home, pleasantly tired, but also refreshed by this new contact with nature.

P.S. It was very gratifying to note the restraint exercised in the picking of wildflowers - PLEASE KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK.

EXTRA - Excursion 12th October, 1963 - Mr. J. Peterson.

As a result of several requests an "unofficial in-between" Excursion was held on Saturday 12th October, after lunch.

All members who could be reached were advised, and the number of starters certainly indicated the need for more frequent excursions during the wild flower season. The purpose of the Excursion was primarily Orchids, the first stop being made along the Morwell-Traralgon Road. Here the Golden Moth Orchid (*Diuris pendunculata*), was found among a profusion of lilies and other flowers. Here also some members were introduced to the intricacies of the Grass Trigger Plant (*Stylidium graminifolium*).

The convoy then proceeded to the Jeeralang North Road, where Mr. Homman gave a series of excellent short talks, explaining the differences between various types of orchids. Among orchids seen by members were two types of Spider Orchids, the fringed (*C. dilatata*), and the common Spider Orchid (*C. Patersonii*). Quite a number of the green-hood (*Pterostylis*) family were found, including the Nodding Greenhood (*P. Nutans*), the Blunt Greenhood (*P. Curta*), the Maroon Greenhood (*P. Pendunculata*), the tall Greenhood (*P. Longifolia*), and the Mountain Greenhood (*P. Alpina*). The pointed Greenhood (*P. Acuminata*) was quite plentiful the week before, but had died out, leaving only a couple of dried samples. This was disappointing, as it would have been nice for members to see this uncommon Orchid growing.

However, this disappointment was made up for in the finding of a lovely specimen of the Wallflower Orchid (*Diuris Longifolia*). The normal height to this plant is 12" - 18", but this beauty was 27". In the words of the Herbarium "a very robust specimen".

(The following day while I was photographing and measuring this Orchid, one of the local residents showed me some Greenhoods growing in a nearby swamp. These turned out to be the Sickie Greenhood (*P. falcata*), a new addition to our record for the area.)

Further on among the Clematis, some confusing white samples of the Pink Caladenia (*C. Carneae*) were found. However, when the pink version was shown, some of the confusion was cleared up.

Shortly after a "cuppa", the assembly broke up, members returning home after another very enjoyable and illuminating afternoon.

Thought for the Day: Why do the nicest wildflowers grow on the road when snakes are sighted.

Executive Committee Meeting - Monday, 11th November.

With the President, Mr. K. Eldridge, seven members were present.

Matters dealt with included the following :-

An invitation to members of the Club to attend a meeting of the Science Teachers' Association of Victoria at the High School, Mirboo North, on Thursday, 21st November, when Mr. Coulson will lecture on "The Geology of Gippsland". Members interested should contact the Secretary, Mr. Belgraver, who may be able to arrange transport with other members. It is suggested that it might be possible to arrange to have the lecture repeated for the benefit of members generally.

Reference was made to a letter sent to the V.F.N.C. re Car Stickers.

Also to a letter sent to the Bairnsdale F.N.C. regarding the excursion proposed to the Den of Nargun in February next. This will be amplified in a later News-letter.

The excursion planned to the Bennison High Plains in January was discussed, and final arrangements will also be advised members in good time. It will be desirable for members to share transport, as far as possible, and this aspect may be kept in mind.

ARBORETUM.

Reference was made to the working-bee held on the 2nd November. It was reported that about 75% of the weeding had been done, and that as far as it was known, no children were lost in the high grass. The working -bee has been arranged for Sunday, 1st December, and it would be appreciated if as many members as possible could attend.

Much work still remains to be done at the Arboretum, in addition to weeding. It is estimated that a number of trees will have to be replanted to replace those which have failed, and, of course, some 400 trees were not available when the planting was carried out.

MEETINGS.

The Club will not meet during December or January, although the Executive Committee has arranged to meet as usual during December. A copy of the News-letter will be distributed to members during this period in order to keep them in touch with things.

LIBRARY AND LIBRARIAN.

The Club has a library of about 10 (ten) books, and a number of booklets and pamphlets. These are in the care of Mr. J. Peterson, at 14 Barry Street, Morwell, who will be pleased to make them available for reference at his home at any time. They will also be available at each meeting of the Club.

PROGRAM FOR 1964.

The Executive has prepared a tentative program for 1964, and this will be finalised at the next Executive meeting, and given to members as soon as practicable thereafter.

Special Excursion for Children held Saturday, 9th November, 1963.
(Described by Miss Rossiter.)

This was at the Trig Point, McDonald's Track, near Hernes Oak.

Besides our own junior members there were fourteen Guides from Yinnar, and eight other young visitors present.

The leaders for the afternoon were Mr. Laurie Galbraith and Mr. Geoffrey Galbraith. Many things of interest were pointed out to the children, who thoroughly enjoyed the day. The hope was expressed that another such excursion would be held next Spring as the Children had benefited so much from the afternoon.

The next Excursion - Saturday, ^{30th} ~~23rd~~ November, 1963.

To the Yallourn Open Cut Leader - Mr. A.T.H. Adams

Meeting place - Briquette Factory Gate at 1.30 p.m.

Next General Meeting of the Club.

Wednesday, 27th November at the Morwell High School at 8.00 p.m.

Subject - Birdlife with coloured slides.

Lecturer - Miss Ina Watson.

Highlights of the C.A.E. Spring School at Mt. Beauty.

Miss Jean Galbraith, who attended the School, as a Leader and with a general interest in the activities of the School, has kindly provided, by request, some of the highlights over the period.

"Three members of our Club recently spent an enjoyable week at the C.A.E. Spring School at Mt. Beauty. These schools are run yearly by the Council of Adult Education, for people who wish to study the natural history of a particular area. They have a choice of six subjects to study, and may join classes in geology, botany, bird-study, art, bushcraft, or folklore.

Each group was led by someone who had specialised knowledge of the subject, and each specialist gave one general talk to the whole school. This was at 9.30 a.m. - Geology on the first morning, Folklore on the next, and so on. Often another short talk (and on Sunday an undenominational Church service) was fitted in between breakfast and 9.30 a.m.

Morning tea followed the general talk, and at 11 a.m. each Leader went off with his group - Birds in the lounge, Botany in the ballroom, and so on, where lectures and discussions lasted until about 12.30.

Except on two days when a picnic lunch was taken to the high plains, afternoon excursions began at 2 p.m., and lasted until about 5.30, and there was normally a lecture or film in the evening.

On one occasion Mr. Sterbenberg showed his remarkable movie films of birds and plants in Holland, and made one member of the party resolve that we must ask him to show them to members of our L.V.F.N.C. before too long.

On the fourth day of the School, the S.E.C. arranged for all students to be shown over their Kiewa project. On other days leaders arranged suitable excursions for their groups.

The lower mountain slopes were alight with flowers, and even on the high plains, where the snow lay in heavy drifts, there were early flowers and some birds.

Every member of the School seemed to enjoy it without reservation, appreciating the friendliness and eager interest of fellow students and lecturers, as much as the more formal activities.

Most Students lived at the Chalet, Mt. Beauty, though a few camped nearby, and, in the words of Mrs. Stretton, the C.A.E. Liaison Officer, "There was not one complaint or grumble during the week, from any of the 126 members of the School " ".

LATROBE VALLEY FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB

December, 1963 - Issue No. 3.

President :

Mr. K. Eldridge,
39 Lafayette Street,
TRARALGON.

Secretary :

Mr. S. Belgraver,
179 Lloyd Street,
MOE.

Dear Fellow Field Naturalists,

This News-letter, in addition to chronicling the organised activities of the Club, contains two contributions from members. Miss Jean Galbraith, a rich mine of authoritative botanical information refers to the flora and fauna of the Wulgulmerang Plateau, observed during a recent visit; and Mr. Frank Jones has supplied a most interesting and unusual account of Lyrebirds in the Boola Forest.

Contributions of a like nature are of great interest and value to members, and contributions on any subject relevant to the wide interests of field naturalists are invited from members generally. These may be sent to the Honorary Editor, at the address shown at the end of this News-letter.

General Meeting held at the Morwell High School, Wednesday, 27th November, 1963.

Miss Ina Watson, of the Fisheries & Wild Life Department, gave a talk illustrated by coloured slides, on the nesting habits of a wide variety of Australian birds.

She first made reference to the fact that 73% of Australian birds were insectivorous, and therefore vulnerable to insecticides and weedicides, which are now used extensively, and that great care in their use is desirable in the interests of the protection and preservation of many species.

She also referred to the Ornithological Research Group (THORG) which is working in close association with the Department on the many aspects of protection and conservation.

Some few descriptions of the birds were missed, because of the difficulty in taking notes, in the circumstances, but the following sets out the birds in the order in which they were referred to by Miss Watson, with the few exceptions.

Very much like humans, some birds are house proud in their nesting habits; some build substantial and elaborate nests; others go to very little trouble; while a few are definitely "slummy". The nesting habits of each species is, however, generally consistent.

The first slides shown were of the ground nesters, which include the sea and water birds. A characteristic of these birds is that their young, on emerging from the eggs, are usually better developed than other species. One of the Plovers (Charadriidae), lays its eggs on the bare floor, as does the White Throated Nightjar (Eurostopodus mystacalis); and the Red Capped Dotterel (Chadladius bicinctus), one of the Plover group, makes a depression on the ground with shells etc. The Fairy Tern (Sterna nereis) makes a depression on the ground and is a colony nester. The Chestnut Quail Thrust (Castaneothorus castanotum), whose habitat includes the Mallee plains, makes a depression on the ground, lined with twigs and leaves. The Speckled Warbler (Chthonicola sagitata) also makes its nest in a depression.

Another group was represented by the so aptly named Rainbow Bird (Merops ornatus), a beautiful bird of many colours, which inhabits the open forest, and makes a long slanting burrow of up to seven feet with the nest in a chamber at the end of the burrow.

The little Penguin (*Eudyptula minor*) which attracts many visitors to Phillip Island, makes a burrow above the beach in overhanging pigface, etc. The Mutton Bird or Short Tailed Shearwater also nests in burrows and in colonies. It takes part in a great migration each year, the young being left to find their own way, and the birds returning, sometimes to the same nest, at about October.

Bronzewing Pigeons make untidy nests, and Miss Watson gave them the reputation of being poor parents. Their rather repulsive looking young might provide the explanation. The Tawny Frogmouth (*Podargus strigoides*), a cute looking bird, makes a stick platform nest on a limb; and the Jacky Winter (*Microeca fascians*), one of the Flycatchers, builds a ridiculously small nest, even for so small a bird, saucer-like, in a fork. The Crested Bell-bird (*Oreoica gutturalis*), has bell-like notes, (Leach refers to it as a ventriloquist), and makes a nest with bark, twigs and leaves, near the ground, decorating it with caterpillars, the significance of which is not known.

The Chestnut Teal (*Anas castanea*), and the Black Duck (*Anas superciliosa*) make open nests, usually on the ground.

The Kookaburra or Great Brown Kingfisher (*Dacelo gigas*), the universally known Australian bird, uses a hole in a tree, near which it hangs its mixed grill of reptiles, insects, grubs, crabs, small mammals, and sometimes small birds. Of the Parrots, the Eastern Rosella (*Polytelis eximius*) uses a hole in a tree, although the slide shown was of the bird with a nest in a spout, with another picture of its wierd looking young; the Blue Winged Parrot (*Neopheme chrysostoma*) also using a hole of a tree, stump or log. The Brown Parrot, presumably the Bourke Parrot (*Neophema bourkii*), which Miss Watson referred to towards the end of her talk, makes a nest on the ground, and for very obvious reasons is now very rare.

The Owlet Nightjar (*Aegotheles cristata*) which Leach places in a family of its own, nests in a hollow limb. The Southern Emu Wren (*Stipituris malachurus*) makes its nest in the grass tufts; while the Black backed Blue Wren (*Malurus melanotus*), often seen in the Mallee country, builds a dome of fibres with a side entrance near the ground. The Red Browed Firetail Finch (*Aegintha temporalis*) uses woven grass in bush like bottle on its side, as does the Zebra Finch (*Taeniopygia castanotis*). The Little Thornbill (*Acanthiza nana*) builds an interesting nest which is covered with moss and cobweb material; and the house-proud Southern Yellow Robin (*Eopsaltria australis*) builds a beautiful, dainty nest which is cup-like and decorated with lichen and bark flakes.

The Willie Wagtail or Black and White Fantail (*Rhipidura setosa*) the familiar bird with the constantly twitching tail, makes a neat cobweb cup usually on a horizontal limb; and its near relative the Scissors Grinder or Restless Flycatcher (*Seisura inquieta*) a cup of grass, etc., decorated similar to that of the Yellow Robin with lichen; and the Grey Fantail (*Rhipidura fuliginosa*), a very musical songbird, a nest of fine fibres. The Golden Whistler or Coach-Whip Bird (*Pachycephala pectoralis*), which is so often heard in the Gippsland forest areas, makes a woven cup-like nest in the fork of a tree or bush.

The Black Faced Wood Swallow (*Artamus cinereus*) makes an open loose cup of twigs. In the slide shown the nest was in a gorse bush. These birds, like some other wood swallows, have the remarkable habit of hanging in a cluster, as Leach states "similar to a great swarm of bees". The Bottle Swallows or Fairy Martins (*Hirunda ariel*) build the typical mud nest of the swallows, like a flask with a narrow neck.

The White Winged Chough (*Corcorax melanorhamphus*), also known as the Black Magpie or Jay, is a mud-nester, and sometimes shares its nest (perhaps unwillingly) with other birds. The slide depicted the tenancy of a Chough's nest taken over by a Kestrel. The Nankeen Kestrel or Sparrow Hawk (*Falco cenchroides*) usually builds in a hollow tree or rock crevice. Miss Watson referred to the alertness of this bird, even when young. The delightful, friendly Magpie Lark (*Grallina cyanoleuca*), with a variety of other popular names, and which the ornithologists find difficult to place, makes a substantial mud-bowl nest, usually on a branch of a tree but sometimes, as in the slide shown, on the cross-arm of a telegraph pole. The Bell-miner or Bell Bird (*Manorina melanophrys*) is one of a large family of about 80 species and makes a nest like a cup of grass, usually suspended.

There followed a number of slides of some of the colony birds, which included the Gormorants (Phalacrocoracidae) of which there are five species in Australia; the Silver Gull (Larus-Novae-Hollandiae); the Gannets (Sulidae); Egrets (Egretta), which makes a pile of sticks and twigs with grass on top, in a tree swamp; the Straw Necked Ibis (Thresitiornis spinicollis), also known as the Farmers' Friend, a large bird (28"), which makes a nest on a platform of vegetation, usually odorous; and the Nankeen Night Heron (Nycticorax caledonicus), making a nest high in the trees consisting of scanty sticks.

The birds which build on water included the Little Grebe (Podiceps cristatus) with a platform nest of weeds anchored to rushes; and the Stilts, both the Banded Stilt (Cladorhynchus leucocephalus), and the White Headed Stilt (Himantopus leucocephalus), sometimes appropriately called "Longshanks", which make their elevated nests in swamps, and are also colony birds.

The "Incubator" birds were represented by the Mallee Fowl (Leipoa Ocellata) which makes a large mound nest of sand and vegetable debris. It lays up to 20 eggs.

The last slides were of the Superb Lyre Bird (Manura Novae-Hollandiae), which builds a bulky, roofed nest, usually near the ground. Miss Watson showed several slides of the nest, and a fine tail display of the bird. Its habits are interestingly amplified by the contribution of Mr. Frank Jones later in this News-letter.

Miss Watson concluded her talk with a reference to the Yallourn Storage Dam, and the work of the Field & Game Association in connection with efforts to protect the water birds and their nesting places.

This written description of the slides shown and the accompanying talk is quite inadequate to convey their photographic excellence, and the interest and beauty of a large cross-section of Australian bird life, which was portrayed.

The Club is greatly indebted to Miss Watson.

Excursion to the Yallourn Open Cut on Saturday, November 30th.

This excursion, which was well attended, had been arranged by Mr. A. T. H. (Tom) Adams, who also very capably, interestingly, and pleasantly led the party.

In connection with the coal deposits in the Yallourn area, Mr. Charles Daley, in his "The Story of Gippsland", makes the following comment "Twenty million years ago, luxuriant sub-tropical vegetation flourished over a large swampy area in what is now the Latrobe Valley. Sluggish rivers carried vegetable debris - tree stems, leaves, bark, pollen grains, seed pods - into quiet lagoons and marshy hollows, where it lay, rotting and stinking, and finally sank. The whole basin was undergoing geological subsidence as the rivers set down layer after layer of this debris - up to eight hundred feet of it over a period of more than a half million years. Towards the end of this time, the rate of subsidence quickened and so the speed and carrying power of the rivers increased. Sand, gravel and mud filled up the old swamps and buried the embryonic coal deposits..... They were to lie undisturbed till the last years of the nineteenth century of our era." And E. Sherbon Hills in "The Physiography of Victoria" states that "Lignite or Brown Coal, of which immense deposits exist at Yallourn and Morwell in Gippsland has not suffered so much compression as has black coal".

Mr. Adams first conducted the party to vantage points around the open cut, providing an extensive explanation of the mechanics of removing the overburden, and then the coal, and transporting the latter by electric train and conveyors to the Briquette Works and Power Houses. A more detailed examination of the coal beds followed, and many members departed heavy laden with a variety of specimens of surprisingly well-preserved kauri and other timbers, leaves, barks, rushes, resin etc. This was another illuminating and valuable excursion.

Meeting of the Executive Committee at the home of Mr. Ken Eldridge on Monday, 9th December, 1963.

The greater part of the business was taken up with the programme of meetings and excursions for 1964. While 1963 has been an interesting year from these points of view, it appears that 1964 will be much busier and of still greater interest to members. The programme will be distributed to members in good time, but it is repeated here that the first excursion will be to the Bennison or Snowy Plains on the 25th January, 1964.

Contributed by Miss Jean Galbraith. "Wulgulmerang".

North of Buchan, between the Buchan and Snowy Rivers, is a place interesting to all naturalists - Wulgulmerang Plateau, 3000 feet above the sea, ringed by mountains of 4000, 5000 and 6000 feet; surrounded by a maze of gorges and ridges, and dropping on the north almost 2000 feet from Black Mountain Station on Little River, to Suggan Buggan.

The Snow Gum forest south of Black Mountain is the only place in Victoria where *Dillurynia prostata* and *Pultenaea sulspicata* grows. Only in this district can you find Kybean Wattle. On Mount Seldom Seen to the west there is a new *Banksia*, still undescribed. One of the commonest of the many orchids is the bronzy yellow *Caladenia testacea*. Toward Mount Deddick to the east - and nowhere else in Victoria - you may see the beautiful *Myoporum floribundum* growing wild.

In the green pastures of Black Mountain there are groups of the moisture loving Sallow Gum and Black Sallee. Two rare species of *Pomaderris*, a subalpine tree everlasting, and the very localized Dagger Wattle, grow along Little River whose cascades and pools divide the pastures, and occasional rocky outcrops are bright with flowers in November. On one such outcrop, of perhaps an acre, I counted 60 species of native plants including two of Victorian Alpine cushion plants - *Scleranthus* - lilac and purple daisies; a deep purple form of Swamp Violet; everlastings; orchids, peas; and species like *Didiscus humilis* and Cushion Carraway which I have not elsewhere seen below 5000 feet.

During a holiday at Wulgulmerang I saw over twenty species of rare native plants, many of which I had never seen before, as well as many other species (White Box, for instance, the commonest tree at Suggan Buggan), which we of Central Gippsland never see in our own district.

This is not only a place of interest for the botanist. Birds are abundant and I saw my first Leaden Flycatchers on the slope of Wombargo, while the sufficiently expert and agile may see the only rock wallabies in Victoria amongst the surrounding cliffs and gorges. The place is also most interesting geologically and historically.

Settlement came to this part of Victoria from the Moonara in N.S.W., and the newly opened road from Wulgulmerang to Jindabyne follows approximately the old stock route. Near the cairn marking the border and the opening of the road one can still see the remains of the cattle-holding yards where toll was once paid on all stock crossing the border.

Contributed by Mr. Frank Jones. "Late Nesting of Lyre Birds in Boola Forest".

Members who were present on our June excursion this year will recall that a Lyre-bird's nest was inspected on the eastern branch of Rintouls in the Boola Forest, and may be interested to know the results of later observations in this area. June is the normal time for the lyre-birds to be nesting, and there was a newly-laid egg in the nest when it was visited by Club members. The slight interference to the surroundings of the nest (inevitable considering the number of people present), apparently did not disturb the bird at all, for on later inspections the female lyre-bird was either in the nest or in the close vicinity. When disturbed from the nest the bird would stay close at hand and approach to within six feet of the observer, obviously trying to entice the intruder away. An interesting point was that although the bird's main object in remaining nearby was to distract attention from the nest, she would occasionally scratch among the undergrowth and feed in a normal unconcerned manner on the creatures she had unearthed, and wood grubs thrown to her by the observer, were usually also eaten.



Those needing transport on this excursion please notify your contact member before 23rd January.

However, the bird continued to brood the egg for seven weeks (a week longer than normal hatching time), before deserting the nest. The egg apparently not being fertile, the work of building the nest, and the long period of brooding the egg had all been in vain.

It was thought at the time that this pair of birds would not breed again until the following year, but a report was received from one of our members on the 25th October of a second nest with a bird in attendance half a mile up the creek from the old one. The lateness of this nest suggests that the birds having failed to raise a young one at the first attempt have tried again, and this time (in spite of being out of season) with much more success, for upon following up this report on the 8th December, the nest was found to contain a well-grown young lyre-bird, about ready to leave. At first sight on this recent inspection there appeared to be no one at home, but when the nest was more closely peered into, there was a lusty scream from within, leaving no doubt that the nest was inhabited.

Even when closely observed all that could be seen of the young one were the legs, one each side of the entrance to the nest, the bird standing with its body almost completely concealed in the upper part of the nest. Immediately the young bird screamed in the nest the mother appeared from the creek running through the ferns and calling to lure the observer away.

Whether the birds at this nest are the same pair that were at the first it is impossible to be sure. They may be a neighbouring pair that have bred late for some reason. Whatever the case, lyre-birds mating so late in the year are sufficiently unusual to be worthy of this report.

G. T. Scanlan
Honorary Editor
C/- Latrobe Valley Com. Hospital,
YALLOURN.



Dear Fellow Field Naturalists,

This Newsletter is a further attempt to keep you informed of what has happened, from the Club point of view, and what is proposed for the future.

February Excursion. by Miss Nancy Rossiter.

The excursion this month on Saturday, February 29th, will be to the Den of Nargun, one of two caves situated in a narrow gorge in Deadcock Creek, a tributary of the Mitchell River, and about 20 miles north-west of Bairnsdale.

The Den of Nargun itself is of unique interest, and was first described by A. W. Howitt in 1875, but, in addition, the magnificent gorges through which one has to pass on the way to the Den, contain a sub-tropical type of vegetation which is of special interest to botanists.

The Bairnsdale Field Naturalists' Club will combine with the L.V.F.N.C. on this excursion which will be led by a member of the former Club.

Those members needing transport should contact any of the following at least two days before the excursion :-

Traralgon	Mr. K. Eldridge	Phone 72 503
Morwell	Mr. J. Peterson	" 42 129
Yallourn	Miss N. Rossiter	" 52 392
Moe	Mr. S. Belgraver	79 Lloyd Street, Moe.
Tyers	Mr. F. Jones	Post Office, Tyers

Starting times at the various meeting places are as follows :-

Moe Post Office	8.15 a.m.
Yallourn Post Office	8.30 a.m.
Morwell Town Hall	8.45 a.m.
Traralgon Methodist Church	
Princes Highway,	9.00 a.m.

It is suggested that all cars then proceed to and meet at Providence Ponds on the Princes Highway, about 11 miles beyond Stratford, at 10.30 a.m.

After a brief search in the area of Providence Ponds, it is intended to continue to the car Paddock in Glenaladale National Park, with an arrival time of 11.00 a.m.

MEMBERS ARE REMINDED THAT THE AREA TO BE VISITED IS A NATIONAL PARK, AND THAT NO SPECIMENS OF ANY DESCRIPTION ARE TO BE COLLECTED OR REMOVED FROM THE PARK.

Note by the Editor.

Members who have not previously visited this area should be advised that the descent to Deadcock Creek, and the progress up the gorge to the two caves may be considered arduous, and perhaps dangerous for the younger children. The subsequent ascent should be undertaken only by those sound in wind and limb. The experience, for those who can endure it, will be a memorable one. For those who, like the Editor, prefer not to face the ordeal of climbing out of the gorge, it is suggested that an interesting diversion could be made to the Mitchell River, about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the car paddock, while the more adventurous (and fit) visit the Den of Nargun.

Meeting of the Executive, Monday 10th February.

The following members of the Club Executive Committee met at the home of Miss Jean Galbraith on the night of Monday, 10th February:-

Miss Galbraith, (Hostess), Mr. Ken Eldridge (President), Miss N. Rossiter, Mr. S. Belgraver (Secretary), Mr. W. McIlroy, (Treasurer), Mrs. F. Kinniburgh, Messrs. J. Peterson, E. Homann, F. Jones, G. T. Scanlan.

The comment was made that meetings of the Executive are open to any member of the Club who might be interested.

2.

The greater part of the business of the evening was devoted to a consideration of the meetings and excursions for the year 1964. These arrangements present difficulties in that before they can be finally decided contacts have to be made with suitable and suggested speakers for meetings, and leaders for excursions.

However, definite arrangements have been made, as shown on the attached program up to and including the month of June.

The meeting on February 26th, will be presented with an interesting film and talk by Mr. Sterkenburg, which was enthusiastically received by the many at the C.A.E. Summer School at Mount Beauty in October last.

The excursion for February is, of course, as explained elsewhere, to the Den of Nargun, the haunt of the mythical monster, in conjunction with members of the Bairnsdale Field Naturalists' Club, one of whom will lead the excursion. This should be extremely interesting.

In March, Mr. J. Nicholas will show specimens on his microprojector. Mr. Nicholas is an interesting and entertaining speaker. Those of us who attended the Science Teachers' Association Meeting at Mirboo North a few months ago are looking forward to this demonstration.

The March excursion is a week earlier in the month because of the intrusion of Easter on Club arrangements, and is to the ever popular Wilson's Promontory.

The anthropologist, Mr. Massola, will add variety to our meetings with a talk on Victorian aboriginals, with special emphasis on those in Gippsland, at the April meeting, and the excursion for that month is to the South Cascade. This excursion has a double purpose - to study the fungi, with Mr. Ken Eldridge as the leader - and to continue the work started by members last year, in the way of making this area more accessible.

To meet requests by several members of the Club, it has been arranged that the May meeting will take the form of demonstrations of the preparation of specimens for collections, etc., by several members.

The May excursion is to the Wildlife Sanctuary near Healesville, an ideal and convenient place for the study of a wide variety of Australian fauna.

"The Antarctic" is to be the subject of a talk by Mr. D. Bechervaise at the June meeting, and it is understood that he will, if time permits, also shown films, of his taking, of Antarctica. The excursion for this month will be to South Gippsland for the purpose of studying fish fossils and the flora of the area to be visited.

The meeting discussed the position at the Hazelwood Arboretum, and the steps to be taken to place the area in order. It was reported that a number of the trees planted had not survived, and that difficulties were being faced in the matter of grass cutting, and watering of the remaining trees during the hotter and dryer weather. Attempts were to be made to arrange a meeting of the Subcommittee appointed some time ago to organise the planting of trees and care of the arboretum.

The March Excursion to Wilson's Promontory.

The March excursion is to be a two-day visit to Wilson's Promontory on the week-end of March 21st - 22nd.

Arrangements have been made to rent a Club Lodge at Tidal River Village for the night of Saturday, 21st March. This lodge, "Wallaby", is equipped with 13 twin bedded rooms, separate showers and toilets for men and women, a large kitchen, and a large dining-cum-lounge room.

The rate per night is 10/- per person, but each person must take sheets and pillow slips. All other facilities are provided, including kitchen requisites.

Members who wish to stay in the Club Lodge should book early with the excursion Secretary, Miss N. T. Rossiter, to avoid disappointment, and the accommodation charge must be paid on or before February 29th, as the rental is payable in advance to the Tourist Bureau.

Excursion to the Bennison Plains. Described by Miss J. Galbraith.

Despite the school holidays, which meant the absence of some members, there must have been about fifty members and friends at Bennison Plains for the excursion on January 25th. We were especially pleased to have the company of a number of our friends from the Warragul F.N.C., and hope we shall be able to share other excursions with them. Perhaps some might care to join us for the Den of Nargun excursion of February 29th, of which particulars are given elsewhere in this News-letter.

The excursion was a most successful and enjoyable one. 110 species of plants were recognised on the Plains, apart from the rich flora of the mountain road, which is substantially the same as that on the road to Mt. Skene.

Early showers cleared before we reached Heyfield; the mountain views were most beautiful, and as the well-graded road climbed round the hills between Mt. Wellington and the Crinoline, following or crossing the Wellington River, Dr. J. M. Andrews of Yallourn pointed out the foot track by which he and many others used to climb Mt. Wellington, fording the river 45 times on the way!

The Mt. Tamboritha road, leaving the Licola road, just before the river crossing at Licola, reaches Bennison Plains (4370 feet) at about 23 miles, and the lunch stop was at this point, where a jeep track goes off to the left before crossing a boggy depression where Mountain Heath Myrtle was in full bloom.

Here, on the short turf in front of an open forest of Black Sallee, White Brittle Gum, and (east of the track) Snow Gum, some members of the party had their first sight of alpine flowers, though it was too late for some species. Few of the plants flowering there could be found in the lowlands.

The Pea-flowers, Mountain Shaggy pea, Mountain Mirbella, and Leafy Bossidea were almost over, but composites (mainly daisies and everlastings) were in full bloom, and about a dozen species were noted, including six species of everlastings and closely related sunrays; and two species of Podolepis with their characteristic tissue like bracts.

Such alpine species as Carraway and Gentianella grew in the snow-grass turf which was dotted with rosettes of stalkless geranium, and the slope up which we walked to a sphagnum bog was scattered with graceful flowers of the Mountain Greenhood. Alpine Water-fern, several heaths and heath-myrtle, as well as blue-flowered Veronica gracilis, Magenta Mountain Milkwort, and the rare orange-berried Cushion Nertera, grew in the deep sphagnum bed.

In the afternoon we drove a couple of miles further along the jeep track (quite passable for cars) and then walked across an old sphagnum bog to the right of the road. On the higher ground there were large silvery-white sheets of Camomile Sunray, and in the bog there were many interesting and attractive mountain plants.

The bog has been very badly trampled by cattle in the past, and much of the water holding sphagnum has been destroyed, though much of interest remains. We saw banks of Alpine Marsh-marigold (Caltha) with curious upturned lobes at the base of each leaf, while some members found patches of the rare little Alpine Ballart, a creeping relative of the "Wild Cherry". A daisy growing on the edge of the bog has rarely been seen in Victoria.

The Peterson family (as usual) found a variety of orchids, including Elbow-orchids near the bog, and hundreds of Austral Ladies' tresses near their weekend camping place on the Wellington River.

It is an interesting commentary on the effect of altitude and climate on the flowering of Gentianella that no flowers remained on the Bennison Plains plants on January 25th, but members who visited Mt. Erica on January 21st found the Gentians hardly in bud, and they were in full bloom on Mt. Baw Baw on February 8th. Last year these lovely alpine flowers were at their best on Mt. Erica on March 3rd, and judging by the plants seen on January 21st they will flower at the same time this year.

Addendum by the Editor.

After lunch near what was known as Chester's Hut, just beyond the Tamboritha Saddle, Dr. Andrew, Miss G. Clarke (an interesting temporary Victorian from Queensland), and the writer, travelled along the excellent, if dusty, New Moroka Road to McFarlane's Hut, and turned off (from the track which continues on to pass over Trapyard Hill) to cross the Big Plain, past Mt. Wellington (5355') to within walking distance of Spion Kop. This country, as mentioned by Miss Galbraith, was intimately known by Dr. Andrew.

The track from McFarlane's Hut is not suitable for the conventional motor car, but can be negotiated safely, in a vehicle with adequate clearance, to within reasonable walking distance of Lake Tali Karng, during the summer months.

We climbed the northern shoulder of Spion Kop, a rocky eminence which provides spectacular views, on all sides, of the ranges broken by deep valleys. Far in the south could be seen part of the Great Valley of Victoria, and an outline of the sand dunes holding back from the sea the Gippsland lakes. To the west the Baw Baws stood out clearly across a series of smaller ranges and valleys, from a viewpoint almost directly opposite to that from which many of us usually regard them.

The flora seen on the way to and from Spion Kop was plentiful and diverse, and would well repay a future excursion by members of the L.V.F.N.C.

The fauna was restricted to sleek, fat, Hereford cattle, not indigenous, but temporary dwellers on the plains which are covered with nutritious grasses during the summer months, and a thick mantle of snow during the winter.

Unsuitability of the conventional motor car ? Repairs have since been carried out on the writer's car !

A Stay at Genoa, and Emu Wrens, etc.

An extract from a letter to Miss J. Galbraith from Mrs. Lance Galbraith, who, with Mr. Galbraith, camped during January at Genoa.

"You would never guess what I discovered at the camp two days ago ! Emu Wrens ! When I saw a brown bird fly over the embankment with a whirr I thought it might be a quail. I followed it down to a strip of high tussock grass beside the river sand. Suddenly I saw wrens in the tussocks - bright orange-brown tiny little wrens. I watched till I saw one with the same bright brown breast and a pale blue bib. I knew from the picture in Leach that they were Emu Wrens, although their tails were not nearly as noticeable as in the picture.

I had an excellent view of a pair on a dead tea-tree. Their backs are brown, striped rufous, especially toward the head; underneath and sides are orange-brown, and the male has a large blue patch under his bill.

They are tiny things. The other wrens look big and heavy beside them, yet the bird book says the Emu Wrens are 2" longer. Their tails are so thin that you can't see them at all unless you are close to them.

I saw a stubble quail next day. I have a list of 61 kinds of birds I have seen on this holiday, and have had excellent views of Whip Birds and Bower Birds".

Contributions to the Newsletter.

The value of the Club Newsletters can be enhanced by contributions of members. It is a co-operative effort depending for success upon the active support of every member of the Club. Contributions may be short or lengthy, and on any aspect of the great variety of subjects of interest to field naturalists. Write your experiences or your doubts to the Honorary Editor at the address below.

G. T. Scanlan
Latrobe Valley Community Hospital,
YALLOURN.

President
Mr. K. Eldridge,
39 Lafayette St. TRARALGON.

Secretary
Mr. S. Belgraver,
79 Lloyd Street, MOE.

Meeting and Excursion Program for the Period - February - June, 1964.

- February 26th Meeting at the Morwell High School.
Film night and commentary by Mr. Sterkenburg
- February 29th Excursion to the Den of Nargun.
Leader. A member of the Bairnsdale Field Naturalists' Club.
- March 21st Weekend excursion to the Wilson's Promontory.
For details see the accompanying explanation in the Newsletter.
- March 25th. Meeting at Morwell High School.
Mr. J. Nicholas. "Microprojection".
- April 22nd Meeting at the Morwell High School
Mr. Massola. "Victorian Aborigines, especially in Gippsland".
- April 25th Excursion to South Cascade. (Thompson Valley Road). Study
of the fungi of the area.
Working bee.
- May 27th Meeting at Morwell High School.
Preparation of a variety of specimens by members of the Club.
- May 30th Excursion to the Colin Mackenzie Wildlife Sanctuary at near
Healesville.
- June 24th Meeting at the Morwell High School.
Mr. Bechervaise. "The Antarctic".
- June 27th Excursion to South Gippsland. "
"Fish fossils and bushland Sanctuary."

(Members are requested to keep this program for reference. Further details of meetings and excursions will be given in the monthly Newsletters).

IATROBE VALLEY FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB

MORWELL

March 1964. No. 5.

MARCH EXCURSION. The weekend at Tidal River, March 21st - 22nd.

Individual parties are making their own arrangements with regard to the time of departure and equipment to be taken. Some are travelling down on Friday, and others on Saturday morning.

The Lodge may be occupied from 1.00 p.m. on the day of booking, and vacated at 10.00a.m. on the Sunday. Those wishing to stay at "Wallaby" on Friday night should book with the Tourist Bureau (at a charge of 10/- per person per night). The booking for Saturday night has been finalised - vacancies only if there are cancellations.

As a guide to the equipment needed for those staying at "Wallaby", the following information has been obtained from the Tourist Bureau :-

Beds have mattresses and pillows, and two blankets - sheets and pillowslips must be provided by members. The Kitchen has two gas stoves, and is fully equipped with cooking utensils, cutlery, crockery, etc., Electric light is provided in the Lodge. Power is on from 7 p.m. to 11.00p.m. and from 7.00a.m. to 9a.m.

Power Points are available for radios, electric razors and irons, and these are the only appliances that may be operated off the system, which is 230 volt A.C.

Members are advised to take an electric torch.

General Information.

A Cafe is available for meals, morning and afternoon teas, and soft drinks. Fresh meat is also available at the Cafe. The Tidal River Store carries ample stocks of tinned foods, grocery lines, bacon, eggs, biscuits, sweets, ice-cream, with meat and ice daily. There are heating and lighting fuels, oil and petrol. For hire Deck Chairs, gas camping stoves, ice chests and refrigerators.

The camping fee is 2/6d per person per night (minimum charge 7/6d per camp site). The site must be vacated at 10.00 a.m. on the day of departure or the fee for an additional night paid. Public showers are available and a charge of 6d. in the meter is made for hot showers. Electricity is not yet available for caravans or camp sites. Firewood - live trees must not be cut, but there is plenty of dead timber for firewood.

Members are again reminded that Wilson's Promontory is a National Park, and that no specimens may be collected in the area.

Nancy Rossiter - Excursion Secretary

With further reference to the Tidal River Excursion, Mr. S. Belgraver reports as follows :-

Notes of the Meeting of the Executive held Tuesday, 10th March, 1964.

Tidal River Excursion. The leader, Miss Jean Galbraith, suggested visits to the Moor, near Squeaky Beach, and to Lilly Pilly Gully on Saturday afternoon, and to Pillar Point on Sunday morning. On Saturday night there will be a screening of slides by Mr. Jim Peterson.

Gemmological Society. The 1964 programme of the Morwell Branch was received, and those members interested should get in touch with the Secretary.

Hazelwood Arboretum. Mr. Parsons reported that up to date only seven plots had been investigated, and invited members to further working bees on Sundays and, if possible, also on weekday. Instructions and stocktaking sheets are in the hut, and the key of the hut is in the usual place. An early finalising of the stock-taking is necessary to enable ordering of the new plants.

Moondarra Reservoir. Mr. Parsons reported that he was in charge of the planting for the area, and requested suggestions.

Moe Old Railway Reserve. The City of Moe will, in the near future, take over the old railway reserve, and Mr. Homann is to make enquiries about the possibility of preserving the land as a permanent reserve.

The Treasurer, Mr. E. McIlroy, requested that MEMBERS BE REMINDED THAT SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR THE CURRENT YEAR ARE NOW DUE.

The next meeting of the Executive is to be held at the home of Miss N. T. Rossiter, 74 Railway Avenue, Yallourn, at 7.30 p.m.

Annual Meeting of the Club - described by Miss J. Galbraith.

The Annual Meeting was followed by a most interesting talk by Mr. Sterkenberg, illustrated by some of his outstanding moving pictures of plant and bird life in Holland.

The first picture, showing the blackbird attending to the nest hygiene of her young family has perhaps not been matched elsewhere. We saw Storks and Hobbys; the curious and spectacular courting displays of the Ruff; pictures of Falcons; the rare Bustard; and the Oriole on her beautifully woven nest; as well as the elaborate preparations and the discomforts (to some of us it appeared the perils also), of the bird photographer.

After these pictures, in black and white, we were shown coloured pictures of the bulb-fields of Holland, many coloured panoramas of hyacinths and tulips, and golden daffodils, accompanied by much interesting information about the methods of cultivation; then almost lovelier pictures of woods and gardens in the radiance of autumn foliage, where in ones and twos the leaves fell softly on the grass or shadowy water.

One of the most remarkable films (not in colour, but not therefore less striking), showed the growth and flowering of many plants - the Shirley Poppies that break their sheathing calyx at the top and lift it on spreading petals, while Iceland Poppies split theirs at the base and often carry it poised on crumbled petals as the buds lift their heads. We saw the slow opening of Anemone petals, and the lifting of soil as the first shoots of Winter Aconites lifted and straightened, and became leaves and flowers before our eyes.

Finally, again in colour, we saw with delight some of the costal wildflowers of Holland. Our applause in supporting the President's thanks to Mr. Sterkenberg was very enthusiastic.

All round the room were still pictures of birds which were worthy study we had not time to give them, because it was time to put out the lights and lock the doors. They were as outstanding as the film, and we hope Mr. Sterkenberg will bring them again.

Excursion to Den of Nargun - Saturday, 29th February. Described by Miss J. Galbraith.

The excursion to Glenaladale National Park (Den of Nargun Mitchell River, and, for the more energetic, Bull's Creek) on February 29th, was one of the largest we have yet had, with many members from the host Club (Bairnsdale) and our own, and some welcome visitors from Warragul also. Although drier than on our previous visit, the gorge, with its age old trees and older rock walls, had still that enchantment and sense of being a world apart from the dry hills above which was felt by its discoverer. The stream was scarcely running, but the dark pools were full - the gnarled Kanookas were still hung with moss, and about a dozen species of ground ferns were still unaffected by the dry weather.

A Treefern clothed with delicate Filmy Ferns (*Hymenophyllum supressiforme*), and several trunks with mats of the curiously un-fernlike Rock Felt-ferns (*Pyrrosia rupestris*), with solid little flat, nearly orbicular fronds, attracted much attention; and all were interested in the rope-like Lianas which were often all we could see of Clematis, Wonga Vine, and Marsderria, whose leaves were in the treetops.

Thorny trails of Smilax and the thin lanceolate leaves of Wombat Berry (*Eustrephus*), and the wholly green foliage of Rose-leaf Bramble (*Rubus rosae-folius*) were also noticeable. The green leaf-backs of the bramble easily distinguished it from the much commoner "Wild Raspberry", which has grey backed leaves.

From the beginning of the descent, where one leaves the eucalypt forest with its sparse undergrowth of Prickly Beard-heath, Giant Hop-bush, and Tree Habea behind, one is struck by the temperate rainforest vegetation of the gorge. Instead of eucalypts the trees are chiefly Sweet Pittosporum (*Pundalatum*), Kanooka (*Tristania laurina*), Burrajong (*Sterculia diversifolia*), Lilly Pilly (*Eugenia smithii*) and two Wattles, Blackwood (*Acacia melanoxylon*), and Silver Wattle (*Acacia dealbata*).

From the top of the slope the dark green oval leaves with clear-cut pale veins, of the climber *Marsdenia rostrata* are conspicuous, and near the bottom of the cliff track there is a clump of the rare Yellowwood (*Accronychia laevis*).

Birds are abundant. Some members had a fine view of the beautiful Rufous Fantail; most noted the Golden Whistlers, White-eared Honeyeaters, Tree-creepers, and Grey Fantails along the stream, and Mrs. Lyndon saw a Honeyeater's nest containing one egg, at eye-level (yet missed by all the rest of us) beside the path above the first cave.

After the party returned to the cars Mr. Peterson expressed our thanks and warm appreciation to members of the Bairnsdale Club who provided the leader for the day.

Further to the Den of Nargun Excursion - by Mr. Jim Peterson.

Special thanks must go to our host Club, Bairnsdale, in particular for the work done by their President, Mr. Bowden, and Secretary, Mr. Barton, making Saturday, February 29th one of our most successful excursions. Most noticeable and appreciated were, (though not necessarily the most important),

Firstly, the number of people who attended, 80 to 90, of whom 50 to 60 came from the Latrobe Valley Branch. It was very nice to see among this gathering Mr. & Mrs. Brookes of the Warragul F.N.C., and Mrs. Lyndon and party from Leongatha.

Secondly, was the way members of both clubs got together. This was greatly aided by Miss Rossiter's forethought in preparing name cards for all members. I'm sure all members returned home with very pleasant memories of the people they met, and the desire to renew acquaintances in the not too distant future.

^{what} With a transformation one undergoes in that short, but sharp, trip from the top of the hill into the completely new world in the gorge of the creek. Where else could one find the beautiful red cliffs, so characteristic of Central Australia, contrasting so vividly with the green of Gippsland. I shall not attempt to further describe this area, one must see it to really appreciate its beauties.

Some members remained at the first cave, the remainder scrambled up Deadcock Creek, to the second cave, the Den of Nargun. Numbers must have counted, as there was no recorded sighting of the Nargun, and I'm sure the youngsters examined every nook and cranny. Nor did the villain abduct any of the children, as all were duly accounted for.

After a short rest a return was made to the first cave. The ruggedness of the walk took its toll, and only a few undertook the extra 'punishment' of walking to Bull Creek. This is another delightful spot worthy of a more leisurely trip. However, time was against us, and we bid a reluctant farewell to the land of our dreams; the dream soon turning to a nightmare in the final torturous climb out of the gorge.

Was it worth it? Would I go back again? How about it in the Spring ???

ABORIGINAL SPIRITS. Extract from Vic. F. N. C. Vol. 79(5) "The Nargun's Cave at Lake Tyers" by Mr. A. Massola, Curator of Anthropology, National Museum of Victoria.

"Malignant spirits are of two kinds" The first are the ghosts of the dead, who will harm the living in consequence of their dead state. The others are wicked supernatural spirits, who can do untold injury, and even cause death of humans for the mere fun of doing it. These latter spirits appear to men in a variety of guises. In Gippsland some are called Baginis, others Dulagars, and a third variety, Narguns.

Baginis, like the sirens of old, entice the passing warrior, who is held prisoner by them, and not released until they have grown tired of him. Although they look like pretty young girls, Baginis can be recognised by their small hands and feet which are generally armed with claws.

Dulagars are very strong men-like spirits. They may be recognised because they are very hairy. They live in the mountains behind Suggan Buggan, and when a woman wanders alone through the bush they fly through the air and some and take her.....

Narguns, who are half human and half animal, lurk in the shadows of deep caves, occasionally calling out "Nga-a-a-a". They are feared exceedingly, for their stone bodies have the power to turn spear or bullet back to the thrower, and so they cannot be killed".

WITHIN CITY BOUNDARIES. by Mr. E. Homann of Moe.

The following short reference by Mr. Homann indicates that it is not necessary to go far afield to recognise and appreciate some of the tremendous variety of flora and fauna in Australia. This note is a challenge to other members of the Club to relate similar experiences and "finds".

"During the first week in December one of our members in an excursion of an hour, a quarter of a mile from his home, found Snipe; Blue tongued Lizards; purple Bladder-worts; Xyris gracilis - a lovely yellow flower related to the lilies; Diosera binata, a rare Sundew; the tall Austral Leek Orchid. Added to these was a assorted group of tea-trees, paper-barks and hakeas.

All of these were found within the boundaries of the City of Moe".

President.

Mr. K. Eldridge
39 Lafayette Street,
TRARALGON.

Honorary Editor.

G. T. Scanlan
L.V.C. Hospital,
YALLOURN.

Secretary

Mr. S. Belgraver,
79 Lloyd Street,
MOE.

LATROBE VALLEY FIELD NATURALIST'S CLUB.

Issue No. 6.

April 1964.

Dear Fellow Field Naturalists,

In this issue we include contributions from several members, one of them, to our great pleasure, from one of the younger but no less active and knowledgeable members, Brian Kane. All members are invited to make this Newsletter a continuing co-operative effort.

General Meeting Wednesday 22nd. April. The subject matter of this meeting has been unavoidably altered to a talk on "Soils and Soils Conservation", the lecturer being Dr. Fisher. You can be assured that it will be a worthy alternative to the lecture previously arranged and advertised. The meeting will start at 7.30 p.m., and members are requested to be at the Morwell High School in good time for Dr. Fisher's talk.

Excursion Saturday 25th. April. This month the excursion is to the South Cascade, which may be reached by one of the many roads leading to Erica and then on to Parker's Corner, and along the Thomson Valley Road. This outing is to take the form of a Working-Bee at South Cascade, which is a tributary of the Thomson River. A track is to be made and a bridge built, and members are asked to take suitable implements, such as mattocks, axes, spades, machetes etc.. In spare (?) moments a search for fungi, mosses and ferns may be made, as there are plenty in this area. Mosses should not be disturbed on rock faces as they take a long time to regenerate if broken away.

The starting time is 8.30 a.m. at Tyers, Traralgon, Yallourn and Moe Post Offices, and at the Morwell Town Hall. Members needing transport should notify their local contact members two days beforehand.

Excursion to Healesville Saturday May 30th. It is proposed to charter a bus for the excursion to the Healesville Sanctuary on this date, if there is sufficient support from members. The fare will be £1 for adults and there will be no charge for children. As it will be necessary to know in advance the number of members who intend to go on this excursion, so that arrangements may be made with Latrobe Valley Bus Lines, members are asked to let the Excursion Secretary know by Monday May 18th. if they intend to go on the trip.

Bairnsdale Field Naturalist Club Excursion. This Club is making an excursion to Walhalla on Sunday 19th. April, leaving Bairnsdale at 8.30 a.m. and passing through Maffra, Heyfield and Cowarr. Members of the L.V.F.N.C. have been invited to join this excursion, and it is hoped that some members will be able to take part.

Nancy Rossiter.
Excursion Secretary.

General Meeting Wednesday 25th. March 1964. Described by Mr. Jim Peterson.

The main business of the evening took the form of a lecture and demonstration of Microprojection by Mr. John Nicholas, and, as usual, was held at the Morwell High School.

Previously, we as a Club have considered the study of minute organisms out of our reach- a subject to be seen only on television or the like. However, Mr. Nicholas most capably demonstrated that this is not so. By using a standard 35 m.m. projector, and a special fitting to magnify the live subject being viewed, we were shown that the study of minute plant and animal life is possible, and we saw these in all their detail and movement. We saw the power of magnification when a portion of a mosquito, projected on the screen, appeared to have legs equal in size to those of an elephant.

Because of the short time at his disposal, Mr. Nicholas was only able to introduce to us the various fascinating subjects open to microprojection, but it was sufficient for us to realise that this is

one of the single greatest aids to field naturalist studies. I do hope we have the opportunity to see much more of microprojection in the near future, with John Nicholas at the controls.

Description of the Excursion to Wilson's Promontory by Mr.

Frank Jones.

Preservation of Wild Life on Wilson's Promontory.

Clear blue skies and magnificent scenery greeted members of the Field Naturalists' Club who were lucky enough to make the trip for the weekend excursion to the Promontory. This remnant of the ancient isthmus connecting the mainland to Tasmania was a continuous source of interest and wonder to all.

The promontory is of course a National Park and Game Reserve, and evidence of this was seen in many places. The Black-tailed Wallabies that feed in the early morning, by the swamps along the Derby River, sit up to watch the passer-by without fear, while White-faced Herons and Swamp hens stalk in the nearby marsh, completing a scene of peace and beauty, with the granite-crowned hills in the background.

Further on at the Tidal River Camp we found the home, not only of the campers, but also of a variety of native birds and animals. Crimson Rosellas accustomed to having human beings in their environment have become quite tame, while the raucous calls of the Little Wattle birds serve to rouse the sleepy campers at dawn. At night Wombats roam casually about the camp, snipping the short lawn grass as they move, and ignoring the presence of man and his belongings. A tame kangaroo bounds about between the cars and tents, preferring the easy life of the camping ground to the rugged existence of the more open parts of the Reserve where mobs of its own kind are found.

From several points around Tidal River walking tracks lead off to the mountains, bays and gullies, making it easy to explore the natural features of the park which, apart from the ravages of bush-fires in some parts, remain unspoilt.

The whole area with its wide variety of animal and plant life must have been a happy hunting ground for the aborigines of the past, a role that it continues to fill for the nature lovers of today. Here we have mountains, some of which rise to over 2000 feet (not high as mountains go) but impressive due to the fact that they rise practically from sea-level, and are topped by massive granite tors. The hillsides are clothed with a verdant growth of vegetation consisting of a confusing variety of plants both common and rare. The Banksias, Hakeas and Casuarinas grow here in profusion, and the Eucalypts too are represented by a number of interesting species. The true Tasmanian Blue Gum (*E. globulus*) grows here, the occurrence of which in combination with a number of other plants provides evidence of a former land connection with Tasmania. The Brown Stringy Bark (*E. baxteri*) occurs in its dwarf coastal form on the exposed headlands to the typical forest tree in the sheltered folds of the hills. The Gippsland Mallee (*E. hitsoniana*) with its interesting buds and fruits is also common in some areas on the lower parts of the Promontory.

There is unlimited scope for the nature lover in this area, whether the interest be in botany, geology, zoology, ornithology, or any other form of study, or just an appreciation of being out in a wonderland of nature in one of the most beautiful parts of Victoria.

On looking back and visualising the green hills sloping down to the long rocky headlands, and the deep blue and green of the sea, it is little wonder that a future visit to Wilson's Promontory is already being considered.

An Appreciation.

The aims of our Club have been basically to preserve and enjoy the natural phenomena of Victoria. Because of our enjoyment of these things we naturally desire to preserve some of the features not only for us but also for future generations. Therein lies one of our lesser publicised aims - to extend to other people the enjoyment which we have been able to find from nature. Like all humans even we like to know that our efforts in this direction have been fruitful.



I am sure that the letter forwarded to the Club by the mother of one our junior members will inspire us to greater efforts in the future. This is an extract from the letter.-

'Please find enclosed a donation to the Club as a small token of my appreciation of the wonderful interest the Naturalist Club is providing for, and the appreciation for the outdoor that it is fostering in our household. I hope later to take an active part in the Club myself.'

Jim Peterson.

Experiences at Apex Park by Brian Kane.

On December 19th. and 20th. last, while camping at Apex Park, about 19 miles south of Morwell, I noticed only a small variety of wild flowers in bloom. There were Yellow and White Field Daisies on the hill-sides, while Clematis, Dogwood and Wonga Vine bloomed in the gullies.

However, birds were there in hundreds. Besides the more common Silvereyes, Mistletoe Birds, Tree-creepers, Flycatchers, Magpies, Kookaburras, Crows and Whipbirds, I saw Owls, Cockatoos, and even two Hawks and a Wedge-tailed Eagle.

On the morning of the 20th. we were fortunate enough to watch a family of five Platypus for about ten minutes.

A Furry Find By Mr. Jim Peterson and Family.

A short while ago while wandering in the bush near Hernes Oak, we came upon a funny little furred object, scarcely larger than the first joint of one's thumb, sitting on a piece of bark right out in the open basking in the sun.

Approaching cautiously we found it to be alive, because it half opened one eye. It stayed much this way whilst we placed the bark and it into a plastic bag, ensuring that there was a small opening for air. Our idea was to take it home and then, after identifying it and photographing it, return it to its native haunt.

Arriving home we gingerly took it out of its bag but soon found that our fears of it were much greater than its fear of us, because all it wanted to do was nestle up in the warmth of our hands and go back to sleep. The next operation was to see if it would eat, so while little Julie held it in her hand we rubbed some milk from the end of a match onto its mouth. There was no mistaking its love for milk as it licked the match and also the milk that spilled onto Julie's hand. Soon we had it lapping milk from a spoon. It had its quota, about half a teaspoon, and went back to sleep.

We then attempted to photograph it out in the open (asleep in Julie's hand). I was lining it up for the third shot when it became restless, suddenly jumped up and sprang into some bushes. It was possibly disturbed by the cold wind that was blowing.

We thought this was the last we had seen of it, but later in the afternoon we heard a skirmish in the back yard. Here it was backed up against the fence violently hissing at our dog. Whilst removing the dog it took the opportunity to disappear into next door's yard.

Here our story must end. I believe it could have been an Allied Rat (*Rattus Assimilis*). This is the most widely distributed native rat of Australia, inhabiting the forest and mountainous eastern region. It is almost entirely nocturnal in habit, and does very little damage as its food is mostly native vegetation. It differs from the introduced Brown Rat in being less robust, more softly furred and more delicately coloured. It nests in burrows which may be found under bushes, logs and rocks.

Executive Meeting - Monday, 13th April, 1964.

This meeting was held at the home of Miss Nancy Rossiter, Yallourn.

The following matters were discussed :-

A letter from Mr. Aldo Massola regretting that he was unable to give his talk on the 22nd April, and which will now be substituted by the talk on soils and soil conservation by Dr. Fisher.

A request by Mr. Madden, Headmaster, of the Morwell High School, that meetings of the Club be completed by 10 p.m. each meeting night, and a suggestion that meetings commence at 7.30 p.m.

Club Display Cases.

Mr. Peterson reported that the Display Cases generously donated to the Club by Mr. Erwin Faist were being stored on the premises of Mr. I. Cain, the Morwell Plumber.

A letter was received from the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, with a request that members contact the Institute on any occasion where evidence might be found of aboriginal remains, artefacts, drawings, etc.

Secretary, Mr. Belgraver, will supply the address to any interested members.

Excursion to South Cascade. In discussing the implements necessary for use by the Working Bee, Mr. Homann suggested that a knife and fork could be usefully included.

Excursion to Healesville - May 30th. It was emphasised that members should endeavour to inform Miss Rossiter early, and definitely, whether or not they intend to use the bus on this excursion.

G. T. Scanlan
HONORARY EDITOR

President :
Mr. K. Eldridge,
39 Lafayette Street,
TRARALGON.

Secretary :
Mr. S. Belgraver,
79 Lloyd Street,
MOE.

Dear Fellow Field Naturalists,

It was feared that sufficient material would not be available to make this newsletter possible. However, Miss Jean Galbraith, Mr. Frank Jones and Mr. Jim Peterson provided, close to the "deadline", articles which I am sure you will agree are valuable contributions to the Club's record of natural history. Miss Galbraith is particularly busy with a variety of tasks, and it was almost an imposition to ask her for a further contribution at this time. We are grateful to her, and also to Messrs. F. Jones and J. Peterson, who are consistent and valuable contributors to our newsletter.

MAY EXCURSION TO HEALESVILLE by Excursion Secretary,

Miss Nancy Rossiter.

This is to the Colin Mackenzie Wildlife Sanctuary at Healesville, travelling by bus. As the numbers booking for the bus are fewer than were expected, it may be necessary to increase the adult fare, possibly to 25/-. Fares should be paid to the Excursion Secretary at the monthly meeting on Wednesday 27th., at the latest.

The bus will pick up members at the following places and times:-

Morwell Town Hall.	8 a.m.
Yallourn Post Office.	8. 15 a.m.
Newborough Hotel.	8. 25 a.m.
Moe Post Office.	8. 35 a.m.

It is expected that the party will arrive back in Morwell at about six o'clock.

"FERNS AT SOUTH CASCADE" by Miss Jean Galbraith.

The South Cascade Excursion on April 25th. was not only a successful working bee; it was also a happy experience for everyone there. Work enhanced it and the rain did not spoil it, and there was time for nature-study as well as for work. There were no flowers at that time, but fungi were varied and most beautiful in every colour from white, purple, and sky blue to tan, ochre and scarlet, while there was also beauty of tree and fern and bird and stream.

At least sixteen species of ferns were noted and they were interesting enough to deserve some study.

Tree-ferns.-Two species of tree-ferns grow in or near South Cascade; the Hill or Rough Tree-fern (*Cyathea australis*) grows in the more open places, and its soft fronds are light-green, while the rachis (main midrib of frond) is rough and prickly, contrasting with the Soft Tree-fern (*Dicksonia antarctica*) which has prickly dark-green foliage but soft rachises clothed with papery brown scales. It is Soft Tree-fern which overhangs South Cascade streams and clusters under the Mountain Ash and Myrtle-beech.

Veined Bristle-fern.-(*Polyphelebium venosum*) clothes shaded tree-fern trunks with a veil of translucent pale green fronds, a few inches long and so delicate they look as if they might dissolve at a touch. That is not surprising for they are only one cell thick. The name Bristle-fern refers to a slender bristle springing from each minute spore cup. A few of these were seen on the margins of the fronds.

The shining dark-green papery fronds of Shiny Shield-fern (*Lastreopsis shephardii*) carpeted glades here and there with lacy foliage. Its roughly triangular fronds are cut into small segments and spread parallel to the ground. They grow on wiry stems, one or two feet high at most, from a creeping underground stem. Mother Shield-fern (*Polystichum proliferum*) replaced the more delicate species in the drier places. It is a hardy fern, as finely divided as Shiny Shield-fern, but more or less erect and narrower, with thick shaggy stems and hard lumpy rootstock. The backs of mature fronds are dotted with minute spore-clusters, but it does not grow only from spores. Its common name was given because it is a mother of many. Tiny plants develop on the fronds and drop to the ground where they take root and in their turn develop spores and plantlets.

The Mother Spleen-wort (*Asplenium bulbiferum*), abundant along South Cascade tracks, has a similar habit of "budding off" a family. It is perhaps the most lacy fern in the area, with smooth black

stems and long gracefully drooping dark-green fronds. Its spore-clusters are large and oval, while its relative, the delicate little Necklace Fern (*A. flabellifolium*), has narrow brown sori (spore-clusters) spreading like ribs of a fan on the back of its fan-shaped leaflets, which are strung along slender stalks like a double row of shells in a necklet. The "necklet" illusion extends even to the rachis which continues as a long thread beyond the leaflets, resulting in the regrettable but understandable country name of "Rat-tail". The "tails" are as much beginnings as endings, for where the tip meets the ground it roots and gives rise to new fronds. As a result the rocky clefts where it grows at South Cascade are meshed in a delicate interweaving of many "necklets".

The fern group most abundant throughout the South Cascade forest is Blechnum; the Water-fern group. Six species grow along the stream and on the hillsides. All have at least two characters in common. The fronds are once divided only ("fishbone shape"), and instead of bearing spores on the back of typical fronds they have specialised fruiting fronds which spring up in a graceful dark-brown cluster, crowning a nest of spreading broader green barren fronds. Gristle-fern has not such specialised fruiting fronds as the others; they are nearly as broad as the barren ones and green above, though most of the back is hidden by a broad double line of brown spores on each segment. It is a fairly light-green fern, crisp and wavy-edged, and most delightfully coloured when young.

Hard Water-fern (*B. procerum*) has very large hard dark-green fronds, and the long narrow segments of its fruiting fronds look as if cut from brown leather bootlaces; indeed that is what the segments of most *Blechnum* species suggest.

Fishbone Water-fern (*B. nudum*) has soft light-green fronds, very flat and smooth and not divided right to the rachis, while the thin fronds of Soft Water-fern (*B. minus*) are cut right to the rachis, with delicately waved segments. Those of Ray Water-fern (*B. fluviatile*) have noticeably short broad and blunt segments, thin and rather light-green. Lance Water-fern (*B. aggregatum*) last of the group, has long fronds narrowed gradually to each end.

One Rasp-fern (*Doodia*) grows there. It has fronds rather like those of a Water-fern, but rough and rasp-like to touch, and with oval spore-clusters on normal fronds, instead of narrow dark-brown fruiting fronds. Its young fronds are as delicate a rose-pink as those of Gristle-fern.

The very soft luxuriant fronds of Batswing Fern (*Histiopteris incisa*) grow up like bracken beside the path, but they are softer than any bracken, with very smooth, almost waxy broad segments of a slightly bluish green, and very smooth stems. The delicately cut segments are not like oak-leaves, yet always suggest one of its common names "Oak Fern", and many of the are narrowly margined on the back with brown spores which in their pattern suggested the related bracken.

The broadly shining and more or less strap-shaped bright green fronds of Kangaroo Fern (*Microsorium diversifolium*) wave like kangaroo tails (but quite flat papery ones!) from rocks and logs covered with its interwoven creeping stems, and the dainty little Finger Fern (*Grammitis billardiera*) grows in similar positions, and looks like a miniature edition of Kangaroo Fern except that it has fronds only a few inches long instead of about a foot, tufted instead of creeping, and with spores growing in spreading lines instead of cushion-like round dots.

Note. The list of South Cascade ferns is made from memory. There are certainly other species there, but the ones mentioned give an indication of the riches to be found in the shelter of Mountain Ash and Silver Wattle, Myrtle-beech and Sassafras in that place of rocks and streams.

J.G.

"WORKING BEE - SOUTH CASCADE" by Mr. Jim Peterson.

On Saturday the 25th. April we learnt that although the weather may be glorious on the lowlands, it can be very wet in the mountains. However, this did not deter twenty to thirty members from making a prodigious effort and the completing of a job which exceeded all expectations.

Early arrivals wasted no time and carried huge slabs of timber to the site of the bridge. These had been cut and brought by Mr. Frank Jones. The slabs were laid and fixed by our Honorary Bridge-builder, 1st.

Class, Mr. E. McElroy, who remained at his post until the last huge nail was hammered in. (How's the arm Ted?).--This early completion of the bridge allowed the main group to cross to the north side of the creek and continue work on the track. By lunch-time the track was through to the waterfall.

After lunch and during an easing off of the rain, a leisurely walk was taken by all along the track, taking time to absorb the beauties of the area, and noting the great variety of fungi. Then back to work, and the clearing of a track up to the old tramway track. From here the party was able to complete the circuit back to the cars along the old tramway and the road. The completed circuit is a most pleasant walk of about one hours duration, and surely must rate among the best of its kind.

Future work in the area will be the name tagging of ferns and trees along the path; the consolidation of the track in some parts; and perhaps we may be able to make an alternative path down the west side of the fern-glades.

J.P.

GENERAL MEETING-- WEDNESDAY 22ND. APRIL -- ADDRESS BY DR. FISHER. Described by Miss Jean Galbraith.

We were fortunate in having Dr. Fisher of the Soil Conservation Authority as guest speaker at our April meeting. After describing Gippsland soil types in relation to conservation, he told us something of the work of his Department in controlling soil erosion in Central Gippsland, and illustrated methods of minimising water erosion.

Erosion by water can be a problem over most of Gippsland, and both water and wind erosion endanger the coast.

Trouble seems always to begin when soil is exposed or disturbed. So long as it is clothed with vegetation; with forest in the Mountains and pasture or natural ground cover elsewhere, there is no serious erosion, but as soon as the soil is exposed by clearing or earth movement, and water concentrated in such a way that it beats on, or rushes over the bare ground, there is trouble: very serious trouble, as some of Dr. Fisher's slides showed.

Our lecturer suggested that when the soil cover was broken the surface should be so graded that was spread in a shallow, gently sloping channel instead of concentrated in a sharp edged narrow one, and that the surface should be grassed over. If this were done, and ploughing contoured (i.e. with furrows following round the hills at a uniform level) to hold and conserve water, instead of running up and down slopes, and concentrating water in swift eroding streams; and if forest cover were retained on steep hills, erosion danger would be minimised.

Where trouble has already started, and grading and grassing gave insufficient control, quickly growing trees can help, and the Soil Conservation Authority is always ready to advise on other measures, and deal with problems that arise. The sooner their advice is asked, the less costly in soil, time and money the reclamation measures will be.

The talk was illustrated with a fine series of slides showing both erosion hazards and control measures. Dr. Fisher illustrated, as important controls, marram grass planting on the coast, the fencing of threatened areas to encourage regeneration of ground cover and protect it from trampling both by animals and humans; the wiring of brushwood over bare cuttings to provide rootholds for vegetation, and, especially important, the provision of stock watering places, filled from streams, so that the streams themselves could be fenced to keep animals from trampling the banks and margins.

In advanced washways it often becomes necessary to build various structures, including concrete benches and spillways, to take the impact of rushing water, but if the danger is recognised in time, such expensive measures should not be necessary.

Dr. Fisher's pleasant manner and readiness to answer all our questions, added to the value and pleasure of the evening, and the vote of thanks moved by Mr. Macdonald was carried by acclamation.

Note: This report was written more than a fortnight after the meeting, and I ask the indulgence of those with better memories who will recall important points I have left out.

J.G.

"NOTES ON THE SEASONAL HABITS OF SOME LOCAL BIRDS" by Mr. Frank Jones.

One of the most fascinating aspects of bird-watching is to anticipate, through previous experience, the changes in the habits of birds with the progress of the seasons. Consider for instance the case of the Gang-gang Cockatoo (*Callocephalon fimbriatum*), which will be observed for the greater part of the year, high in the tree-tops feeding on the seed capsules of the Eucalypts, but with the approach of summer when many of the Acacias have begun to set seed these birds will come down to feed on the green seed-pods.

These comical grey birds (the males have a red head), with their curly cocky crests, make a colourful and amusing picture when seen close at hand. During Winter the Gang-gangs will often congregate in flocks in suitable areas and feed in pairs during the day. Late in the afternoon they will flock together, calling harshly as they fly, and gather in the trees around a favoured drinking pool. Here they tarry for a while, as if waiting for the late-comers, then fly down, sometimes all at once, sometimes a few at a time, for their evening drink.

Gang-gangs seem only to drink once a day and always about sundown, and when feeding in the same locality for any length of time, usually visit the same drinking pool every evening, even when plenty of alternative drinking water is available. It has been noticed that they will often choose to drink where water is caught in the hollow of a tree in preference to descending to the ground. This habit perhaps has survival value in that a bird drinking high in a tree is in little danger from predators, of which the goanna would be the only one which would habitually lurk in the hollows of trees. However, at the time of the year when the water would be retained in hollows, the goannas would be inactive.

The Whip-bird (*Psophodes olivaceus*), an inconspicuous bird of the undergrowth, also has its seasonal changes of habit. These birds appear to be stationary in habitat, the same pair remaining in the same area for most of their lives, and they are sometimes accompanied by their young for part of the year. Throughout the day, in the Winter, a pair may be observed usually close together in various parts of their range, but at night they apparently have a favourite patch of undergrowth in which to roost. If their camping place is known, and visited early in the morning, they will be seen to leave for their days foraging with almost alarm-clock regularity every morning, and if suitable feed (such as termites or wood-grubs) is placed close to their camp before they awaken, they will learn to look for this, and so provide the watcher with opportunities to observe them before they go further afield.

An interesting comparison with the Whip-bird is the Spotted Quail-thrush (*Cinclosoma punctatum*), for both species are birds that remain in their own defined areas throughout the year, but Whip-birds being dwellers of the lush gullies and dense coastal thickets, can apparently find enough feed in an area surrounding one night camp, whereas Quail-thrushes being birds of the more sparse upper slopes and ridges, and the timbered plains, have a much larger territory throughout which they have a chain of more or less regularly used night-camps. The birds usually feed for several days around each camp before moving on to the next.

As with the Whip-bird, the Quail-thrushes may have with them the young ones of the previous breeding season, if they have been lucky enough to rear their brood. In addition, in the case of the Quail-thrush the birds may be seen at odd times during the year to have gathered in groups of up to ten or more as if birds from adjoining territories have come together in a social gathering for a joint tour of the whole area.

It may be wondered, considering the topography of the habitats of some of our native birds, how anyone can say with certainty that only one pair of a given species inhabits a particular area, but observation over a long period of time during which one pair only is seen in a known locality, and no others are seen in the same area at about the same time, indicates that only one pair exists in the vicinity, and it may be from such observations that ways may be devised to preserve our native birds.

-F.J.

EXECUTIVE MEETING NOTES Supplied by the Honorary Secretary
Mr. S. Belgraver.

The May Executive Meeting was held at the home of Miss Nancy Rossiter, in Yallourn, on the 13th. May.

The following matters were discussed at the Meeting:-

The third Newsletter from the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies was received, and those interested are invited to contact the Secretary.

The Secretary of the Australian Natural History Medallion Selection Committee has asked for nominations for the 1964 Medallion.

Regarding the possibility of creating the Sayers Trig Point region as a Reserve, Mr. Auchterlonie has been approached to make an investigation of the area.

The Director of the Somers Camp has been asked to forward the addresses of young people, who are living in our area, and have attended the camp.

The President spoke of the progress of the Hazelwood Arboretum, and stated that the State Electricity Commission had already cultivated a large part of the area. Mr. Eldridge was told that an official answer to the request regarding maintenance of the Arboretum will soon be made available.

Mr. Homann reported that the Edward Hunter Pool in Moe involved a botanical survey, and advised contacting the City of Moe Council.

Miss Joan Galbraith was preparing a letter to be sent to other Field Naturalist Clubs throughout Australia regarding F.N.C. Car Stickers.

NEXT GENERAL MEETING OF THE CLUB.

This is to be held on Wednesday next the 27th. May, and is a members' night. It will take the form of a demonstration of the preparation of a variety of specimens for preservation. The preservation of plants will be demonstrated by Miss Joan Galbraith, and beetles and butterflies by Mr. Courtney of Morwell.

A note on the Healesville Excursion on May 30th.

Those taking part in the Excursion should take along an extra shilling for the Guide to the Sanctuary. This is an excellent, well prepared, authoritative catalogue of the fauna inmates, as well as a description of the interesting area, historically and otherwise, in which the Sanctuary is situated.

A Challenge to the Younger Members.

Any of the members attending the Healesville Excursion, and being under 18 years of age, are invited to provide a description, for the June Newsletter, of the Excursion. There are no restrictions as to length of the article or articles, they may be long or short, and will be acceptable provided of course that they deal with some aspect of natural history related to the excursion.

G.T. Scanlan.
Honorary Editor.

President.

Mr. K. Eldridge,
 39 Lafayette Street,
Traralgon.

Secretary.

Mr. S. Belgraver,
 79 Lloyd Street,
MOE.

Dear Fellow Field Naturalists,

It is regretted that this Newsletter is somewhat late.

This month we have the privilege of reading a contribution from one of our younger members, Frances Belgraver, on the excursion to the Sir Colin McKenzie Sanctuary at Healesville on Saturday the 30th. May. Messrs. Frank Jones and Jim Peterson, our regular contributors, will also be read with interest, and Miss Nancy Rossiter, Excursion Secretary, provides essential information regarding the next excursion which should attract members in large numbers.

Excursion on Saturday 27th. June. by Miss N. Rossiter.

Mrs. Brewster and Mrs. Lynden will lead this excursion, and the main item of interest will be the Koonwarra fish and fern fossils.

The day should be one of great variety and will include an inspection of a columnar basalt formation, and a visit to the Koonwarra bushland Sanctuary.

Those members who went with the Club to Walkerville last year will remember the wonderful day spent there thanks to Mrs. Brewster and our South Gippsland members, and will be looking forward to another such stimulating and interesting day on June 27th.

Members needing transport should notify their contact members by Thursday June 25th. or earlier, and the times of departure will be :-

Traralgon Post Office.	8.15 a.m.
Morwell Town Hall.	8.30 "
Yallourn Post Office.	8.15 "
Moe Post Office.	8.00 "

Those who are not picking up passengers may prefer to travel direct to South Gippsland to the junction of the Dumbalk - Meeniyah Road with the South Gippsland Highway, where we are to meet the South Gippsland members at 10 a.m....

N.R.

EXCURSION TO THE SIR COLIN MCPHERSON SANCTUARY 30TH. MAY.
by Frances Belgraver.

The bus started at Morwell and picked up the bulk of its passengers. We travelled along the Princes Highway until Warragul, where we turned up the road to Noojee into the undulating, green countryside with its rich volcanic soil. We turned onto the Poweltown road at the Neerim Junction. After this, the bush became denser and the road twisted and turned. In some places in the gullies alongside the road there was thick fog. In some of these gullies the Latrobe River and its tributaries begin. After a short stop at Poweltown we travelled on through the flat Badger Valley. The effects of the fire of two years ago could no longer be seen. At one stage we caught a glimpse of Mt. Donna Buang.

We soon arrived at the entrance of the Sir Colin McKenzie Sanctuary, and from there we broke up and set off to see the Australian animals and birds in their natural surroundings. Only in the last year or so have visitors been able to walk through some of the enclosures, and this makes it easier for photographers to take pictures of the various animals and birds. The Parrot Aviary especially which you could walk through sported various kinds of birds. The water enclosure was also very well done. The favourite among the younger people in the group was the kangaroo enclosure.

We soon came back to the lunch tables and had lunch, which the emus shared with us (mainly without our consent). During lunch we agreed to meet at the Platypus display at 2.30, and after watching this remarkable display we returned to the bus and left the Sanctuary at 3 p.m.. We returned home along the same route by which we came.

Older kangaroos must have enough intelligence to realise they are on display. I noticed this when Julie and I walked through the Kangaroo enclosure. Mr. Jernakov also came in to try and take some photographs. An old-man kangaroo noticed this and immediately stood on its hind legs balancing on its strong tail, and scratched its stomach with a paw. This provided the perfect picture.

F.B.

ANOTHER VIEWPOINT OF THE EXCURSION by Mr. Jim Peterson.

For several years our Club has contemplated hiring a bus for a Healesville excursion. It has been postponed on at least one occasion because of the amount of money which would have to be outlaid, by the Club should it not be well attended. There was then a certain amount of worry for excursion Secretary Miss Nancy Rossiter, waiting for bookings to be filled. We certainly underestimated the support of our members, as the bus was filled and private transport had to be arranged to carry the overflow.

A very good start to a very good excursion'.

The noise of the bus was soon drowned by the animated discussion of its Passengers; the three hour trip to Healesville passed very quickly. Little time was lost entering the Sanctuary, and members soon dispersed having a quick look before lunch, indeed some forgetting lunch.

Lunch provided an exciting interlude as unless extreme care was taken your sandwiches disappeared won a wandering Emu's neck. The highlight was a demonstration of 'necking' between one of our members and one of our feathered friends. After lunch members went their own way each to their own particular studies. To newcomers and those who have not visited the Sanctuary for some time, the place is full of pleasant surprises; and to those who have been recent visitors it will ever present something different. (The author was lost in the walk through the Parrot cage).

In what seemed next to no time we were back in the bus on our way home. The weather which had favoured us all day broke, but to the passengers this was of little consequence as a most successful day was had by all.

J.P.

GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 27th. May 1964.

This took the form of a members' night, and demonstrations in the preparation of specimens were given by Miss Jean Galbraith and Mr. Courtney of Morwell. It is understood that this was a valuable and successful night.

EXECUTIVE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 8TH. JUNE.

This was held at the home of Miss Galbraith, at Tyers, and was attended by the President, Secretary, Treasurer and six members.

The programme for the next six months of this year was discussed, and is to be roneod and supplied to members separately. Members can be assured that the future arrangements will continue to be valuable and interesting.

Discussion took place on the matter of existing and future Reserves, and it is expected that some of these will be referred to at the General Meeting to be held on Wednesday the 24th. of June.

Miss Galbraith showed members at the Meeting a copy of 'The Dumpy Pocket Book for Biologists', which is available from the Austral Book Shop, 263 Collins Street, Melbourne, at 4/11. It is recommended by her as a valuable pocket reference for the amateur biologist.

THE PROPOSED FORMATION OF A BIRD-BANDING GROUP.

by Mr. Frank Jones.

The pleasure of bird-watching is enhanced by being able to recognize individual birds with which the observer has had previous experience. Whether it be a pair of Welcome Swallows returning in the Spring to their nesting place under the eaves of a suburban home or a Falcon to its eyrie on some lonely hillside, it is very satisfying to know that a free, wild creature has come back to the place of its choice, especially if something has been done to preserve the place as a suitable habitat for the species concerned.

It is for the purpose of studying the movements and habits of our birds that the Wildlife Survey Section of the C.S.I.R.O. is conducting a Bird-banding Scheme in which amateur naturalists and organisations such as ours are invited to participate. I think that, although the time that most of our members could give to such activities is unfortunately limited, we could do some practical work in this field, and at the same time enjoy some pleasant days in the bush. The practicability

of bird-banding may be questioned, in view of the fact that on some of our excursions we see few birds, and that for the scheme to be effective the birds have to be trapped and banded, and after release observed or preferably trapped again at a later date. However, from observations made during my spare-time activities of watching and photographing birds, I am convinced that quite a large number of birds could be banded. I am at present feeding a flock of Parrots, (mostly Crimson Rosellas but also a few King Parrots,) and a considerable number of Red-browed Finches and if enough feed can be put out for them to keep them in this area after their natural food has become scarce, they could very easily be trapped and banded. I have also found that by obtaining quantities of termites and scattering these around in suitable places in the Winter months I can attract a few species of insectivorous birds. It is by taking advantage of opportunities such as these, as they come under the notice of various members of the Club that I think the scheme could be made workable.

The C.S.I.R.O. scheme includes all kinds of birds both native and introduced, and the banding of even the most common species can provide valuable information. One example of the application of the data obtained by banding is seen in the breeding control experiment on the Ibises of the Macquarie River district where it is hoped that by flooding the marshes at the right time of the year they can stimulate the breeding of the Ibises to coincide with the hatching of the Australian plague locust, thereby achieving biological control of that most devastating insect. If enough was known of the ecology of our birds much more could be done to encourage their occurrence in places where they are needed for the purpose of insect control, and so curtail to some extent the growing use of expensive insecticides with their harmful side-effects.

All activities in connection with bird-banding would of course have to be carried out according to the approved humane methods, for we are dealing with living things that naturally do not take kindly to being handled, but which if handled gently and released without delay should suffer no real harm. If it is decided to form a bird-banding group it will be necessary for at least one member to obtain a permit from the State Government, and the approval of the C.S.I.R.O., whereupon the equipment will be issued. A team of three would be ideal for the actual trapping and banding, but all other Club members and interested visitors would be welcome on a bird-banding outing. It would be essential before we do any banding that we have a practical demonstration of the methods used, and we are fortunate that an experienced bird-bander has already offered to give such a demonstration on a date to be fixed. Further information in the form of papers from the C.S.I.R.O. and the Fisheries and Wildlife Department are available from me on request.

F.J.

ORCHIDS by Mr. Jim Peterson.

One does not expect to see many native flowers at this time of the year, yet the brilliant red of Running Postman and Correa reflexa can be seen at the Traralgon Reserve. A short look around will reveal at least four orchids out in flower:- myriads of Gnat Orchids (Acianthus eximius), erect Trim Greenhoods (Pterostylis concinna), the last of the Small Greenhoods (Pterostylis parviflora), and the first of the Nodding Greenhoods (Pterostylis nutans). Nearly out in flower are some Tall Greenhoods (Pterostylis longifolia).

To those wishing to learn something of our wildflowers, orchids can provide a most interesting starting point. I have chosen them and cannot see myself ever leaving this field as the study of orchids is very fascinating. Nor do you have to know a lot on the subject to become captivated by them.

What is an Orchid?

There are two things we beginners should look for:-

1. Like some other flowers (Lilies) an orchid has three sepals (the outside of the flower), and three petals. However, it is the shape of these sepals and petals which nearly always will tell you it is an orchid. It is usual for one of the petals to be of a different shape

to the other two. This odd petal is called the labellum or tongue, and its shape can vary from like the normal petal to something bearing absolutely no resemblance to a petal. The other two petals look alike. Sometimes the sepals look like these paired petals, but again can be quite different. One sepal (opposite the labellum), and called the dorsal, can be quite different to the other two sepals. These paired sepals are called the lateral sepals, and quite often can look like a single sepal terminating in two ends.

In a Nodding Greenhood for example we have a hood shaped piece made up of the two paired petals with the dorsal sepal snugly overlapping them like a close fitting roof. Below them shaped like the bottom of a parrot's beak are the lateral sepals, joined together for part of their length, then dividing and terminating in two tails on either side of the hood. If you look inside the beak you will see the labellum which looks just like a tongue and is normally resting on the lateral sepals.

2. In flowers other than orchids we have, in their centre, stamens rod-like shaped with a knob on the end of each which is called the anther, and contains the pollen. They usually surround the thicker rod, which contains the stigma, and to which pollen from another flower will adhere (called pollination). In an orchid however there is only one rod (the column or style), which carries both the stigma and the anthers. This is a major difference between the orchid and other flowers.

In the Nodding Greenhood the column can be seen at the base of the hood or beak, rod-like, with the stigma nearer the base, and the sacs of yellow pollen near the top. Between the stigma and the pollen sacs are two wing-like appendages which play a part in the pollination of this orchid by insects.

J.P.

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MEETING AND EXCURSION PROGRAMME FOR THE PERIOD - JULY-NOVEMBER, 1964.

- July 22 Meeting: Speaker - Mr. A. Coulson.
Subject - Geology of the Yallourn Area.
- July 25 Excursion to place to be advised by the Leader.
Leader - Mr. A. Coulson.
Subject - Geology.
- August 26 Meeting: Speakers - Messrs. R.H. Homann and J. Peterson.
Subject - Orchids, illustrated with slides.
- August 29 Excursion to Sale Common.
Leaders - F. & W.L. Officer and Mr. F.E. Jones.
Subject - Birds.
- September 12 Excursion to Tyers-Erica-Moe district.
Leader - Mr. K.G. Eldridge.
Subject - Eucalypts.
- September 23 Meeting: Speaker - Dr. L.H. Smith.
Subject - Lyrebirds.
- September 26 Excursion to Dutsen Heathland.
Leader - Mr. R.N. Auchterlonie.
Subject - Wildflowers.
- October 10 Excursion to McDonald Track, South end ($\frac{1}{2}$ day).
Leader - Mr. R.N. Auchterlonie.
Subject - Flora.
- October 28 Meeting: Speaker - Dr. Donald F. Thomson (dependent on reply).
Subject - Aborigines and aboriginal life,
especially in Gippsland.
- October 31 Excursion to Blackwarry Scenic Road.
Leader - Miss Jean Galbraith.
Subject - Wildflowers.
- November 14 Working Bee at Hazelwood Arboretum.
- November 25 Meeting: Speaker - Dr. J. Moore Andrew.
Subject - Insects.
- November 28 Excursion to Glenaladale National Park.
Leader - Dr. J. Moore Andrew.
Subject - Collection of specimens of insects.

All meetings are held at the Morwell High School and start at 7.30 p.m. sharp.

Dear Fellow Field Naturalists,

Contributions for this issue of the Newsletter have been so satisfactory that it has been necessary to summarise the itinerary carefully prepared by Mr. A. Coulson of the Excursion which he is to lead on Saturday 25th. of this month.

Members are to assemble at the Yallourn Technical College at 9 a.m., and the party will proceed from there to Pumphouse Road, Yallourn to view Jurassic conglomerate on Silurian bedrock; thence to the Quarry damsite where Silurian sediments steeply folded may be seen, and Jurassic sandstone on the north side of the bridge. At the Yallourn North Extended Coal Mine will describe a monocline in the Brown Coal Beds; and from there take us to the Tyers-Walhalla Road for a view of Latrobe Valley fault scarps, the central ridge of the Haunted Hill Gravels; and a Basalt quarry showing Older Basalt and Quartzite - this is north of Track W7. We should arrive at Rintoul's corner Road, opposite W 3 where it is hoped to see Jurassic fossil plants, and Siluro-Devonian limestone steeply dipping at the Road W3 Lime Kilns, and here it is arranged to have lunch. This should now be about noon, and lunch is to be followed by a thirty minute walk to the L.V.W.S.T. Pipeline to view the conglomerate cliffs. Here are Silurian (Boola) Mudstone overlain by Jurassic conglomerate. It is then proposed to return to the cars at the Lime Kilns and leave for home at about 3 p.m.

Next General Meeting: This is to be held on Wednesday the 22nd. July, as usual at the Morwell High School, and is to take the form of a lecture by Mr. Alan Coulson, Headmaster of the Yallourn High School, his subject being "The Geology of the Yallourn Area".

LECTURE BY MR. J. BECHERVAISE by 'The Three Belgravers'.

On June the 24th. the Club had the pleasure of having Mr. John Bechervaise give a lecture on the subject of 'Antarctica'.

It is not easy to do justice to this fascinating and informative talk in one short article. However, we would like to mention a few of the many highlights of this evening. The slides that supported his lecture held everybody spellbound, and some of them were really picturesque. Mr. Bechervaise explained the most acceptable theory of how Antarctica was formed during the early stages of the Ice Age; how, through the movements of the crust of the Earth around the core, the situation arose that this part of the Earth received less and less direct sunlight, thus increasing quantities of ice were formed. This explained why, apart from some mosses and fungi, hardly any other plant life exists. Animal life, on the contrary, is abundant as some were able to adapt themselves to changing circumstances. The food for these animals comes from the sea through currents bringing enormous quantities of squid and plankton from the tropical seas.

Mr. Bechervaise's main emphasis lay on the seals and Penguins. The types of Seals he mentioned were Weddel, Boss, Leopard, Crab-eater, and the Fur and Elephant Seals. At one stage the Fur Seal was nearly extinct because of fortune hunters for the fur. Since this animal is now protected, its number is slowly increasing. The Crab-eater Seal is the staple diet of the Killer Whale; he noticed that every Crab-eater had scars as the result of attacks by Whales. The Elephant Seal was the biggest of the Seals, and weights of up to five tons were quite normal. This explained their appearance as large rocks or enormous piles of solid blubber. Even the newborn Seals did not look like babies - they may have a weight of about 70 lbs.

Of the different types of Penguins mentioned the Emperor Penguin was the most impressive. During the mating season all these penguins get together in a rookery and, after they have chosen mates, they then lay their eggs. Only one egg is laid and it rests on the bird's feet, where it is kept warm by a fold of the abdomen skin which covers it. Remarkable is the fact that both parents take an active part in the incubation of the egg. Both take turns of six weeks each, and when off duty they go to the sea to feed. As soon as the egg is hatched, again the parents take turns in feeding the young bird until it is old enough to look after itself.

Just as the sea currents are important for the supply of food for the land animals, the air currents (with velocities of up to 100 m.p.h. at the 50° Circle) help several types of birds to migrate to their nests in the rocks, sometimes high in the mountains. Some of these birds come from places as far away as Turkey. Due to the scarcity of stones, the same nests are used year after year.

Several pictures taken on Macquarie and Heard Islands showed us the wide variety of plant life so close to the barren Antarctic.

Although Mr. Bechervaise promised to give another lecture to the Club in about five years' time, the general feeling was that this period should be much shorter.

The 3 B's.

EXCURSION TO KOONWARRA, SATURDAY JUNE 27TH. by Florence M. Kinniburgh.

Despite the coldness of the weather, a large party of Field Naturalists, some by different roads, journeyed through some of the gloriously picturesque emerald green and undulating South Gippsland countryside, of rich volcanic soil.

At Koonwarra we met the leaders of the excursion, Mesdames Linden and Brewster, then adjourned to the local Recreation Hall to inspect several collections of colorful Fungi, and to partake in a most enjoyable morning 'cuppa', arranged by our wonderful South Gippsland members and this was greatly appreciated by the fifty-one members who attended this very interesting days' outing.

After a brief visit to a Columnar Basalt formation, our chief interest was in the Fish and Fern Fossil Bed (believed to be of the Jurassic period), discovered about three years ago during road-making activity on the South Gippsland Highway. Since then an intense movement of shale rock by University students and other fossickers have keenly searched for these important petrified organic remains (our F.N's, armed with a diversity of equipment, from picks to screwdrivers, being no exception).

What great excitement upon the discovery of the first piece of Fish fossil! Everyone became intensely busy, digging, splitting and chipping (not always at one's best angle) until sheer hunger surpassed even the most ardent fossicker.

A visit to the Bushland Sanctuary later in the afternoon failed to locate any Koalas, but a wallaby was briefly seen. Vigorous attempts to shake the Ringtail Possums from their tree-top nests failed to disturb their long 'day's night'.

Many varieties of Fungi, including the 'magical' basket type were seen, also two Greenhood Orchids. Both the anterior and posterior suckers of some leeches were felt amongst the dampness of the tree fern glade.

During a brief visit to the nearby 'Desert', a gravel pit area, some of the more hardy native plants and shrubs were seen, including tea-tree, spurge, tinsel lily, wild violets and many other dainty creeping plants, the names of which were not known by the writer.

After a well deserved vote of thanks to our South Gippsland members, we wended our way home, all, I am sure, completely satisfied with a most interesting and educational day.

F.M.K.

REPORT OF EXECUTIVE MEETING JULY 13TH. by the Secretary, S. Belgraver.

This was held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Ted McElroy, at Morwell. After finalising matters concerning the July Meeting of the Club, and the next Excursion, the following matters were discussed:-

'Victoria's Resources'. It was decided to subscribe to this periodical publication of the Natural Resources Conservation League of Victoria, and to the quarterly magazine of the Geelong F.N. Club. These magazines, together with 'The Field Naturalist' and 'Fur, Feathers and Fins' will circulate amongst interested members, before being placed in the library.

Mr. Jim Peterson read the report of the Sub-Committee regarding Car Stickers. The President thanked him for his comprehensive report, and it was adopted unanimously by the Executive, and is to be forwarded to the Victorian Field Naturalists' Club for their consideration.

Mr. Frank Jones reported on the matter of formation of a Bird Banding Group, and was appointed as Convenor of the Group. This will be a self-contained Group within the Club, submitting an Annual Report to the Club. Further information will be provided by Mr. Jones and will be published in the Newsletter.

The Traralgon Shire Secretary has advised the necessity of forming a Committee of Management for the control of the enlarged Traralgon South Reserve. Messrs. Hunt, Medlow and Peterson, as members of the Club, and Mr. and Mrs. Wolfe and neighbours will be included in those nominated for the Committee.

Four letters were submitted by Mr. Eldridge relating to an application to have Silcox's Hill, near the Morwell-Yinnar Road, declared a Reserve. An official approach will be made to the Shire of Morwell, using these letters as recommendations.

Miss Rossiter reported that further work carried out at the Arboretum included the sorting of labelled stakes into boxes, and that one box for each blocks 13 - 18 had been completed. Some stakes are missing, and new labels require to be made to complete boxes. The trees which were substituted for listed trees at the 1963 planting are still to be checked, and correct labels made for those which have survived. The location of stakes on Blocks 13 - 18 is to be done about three weeks before replanting.

S.B.

BIRD PHOTOGRAPHY IN THE GIPPSLAND BUSH by Frank Jones.

The most common way of photographing birds is to first find their nests, and set up the camera to focus on the nest, and then to wait for the birds to return to tend their eggs or young; whereupon the camera is operated from a distance with a rubber bulb and tube, or an electro-magnetic shutter release device. In fact, some books on the subject are inclined to give the impression that this is the only way in which birds can be photographed. Whereas this method does no harm, providing the photographer understands what the particular subject will tolerate, it does depend on the anxiety of the birds to feed their young. It is certainly undesirable that a timid bird should be kept from its nest for a long period by the sight of a foreign object such as a camera. Also it is a method that can be used only during the breeding months.

Although using the nest photography method myself at times I have, due to the nature of my employment, been able to use other methods which give even greater satisfaction because of the fact that they rely on co-operating with nature rather than taking advantage of the natural instincts of wild creatures. One of the easiest ways of gaining the confidence of birds is to provide them with food when they most need it. In the normal course of bush work this is done unintentionally. Logs split open yield termites and wood-grubs, and the clearing of tracks uncovers worms, grubs and centipedes and other creatures upon which the birds feed, and in doing so become increasingly tame.

Termites (otherwise known as White Ants) are one of the most useful of natural foods that can be used to attract insectivorous birds. It has been estimated that over a million termites may live in a large mound. However, the earlier years of the species of termite most common in our timber country are spent in trees which they gradually eat away. At the same time they build up around the tree with clay until they finally have a clay covered mound. It is while they are in the trees that they are most readily obtainable as food for birds, but as there is usually no external indication as to which trees they are in it is only the person who is regularly engaged in the felling of timber who can provide a continuous supply of these insects for the birds. If termites are scattered around in cold weather (they abscond very quickly if the weather is warm) at a regular feeding place, use

can then be made of the feeding habits of the birds themselves. Wrens and Robins have a habit when feeding on flat ground, of perching on top of any nearby object so that by providing such an object, and focusing his camera upon it the camera-man is in business. Tree-croppers, in bleak weather, will descend to the ground and feed with the more common birds, but are much happier feeding on the vertical trunk of a tree, so a handful of termites sprinkled on the nearest tree makes the most promising focusing point for them. With some of the rarer birds the problem is to put the feed where they will find it. Some species, such as the Whip-bird, have regular night-camps which can be located by early morning and evening observations, and by placing food near to such places before daylight each morning a regular feeding routine can be established. With timid birds it is an advantage to place a dummy camera on the site and leave it there for the birds to become accustomed to.

Occasionally a peculiar habit will be noticed among birds that will point the way to possible success in photographing a difficult subject, and it was one such observation that led me to a method of photographing the Gang-gang Cockatoos. These birds have a habit that seems unique among birds of the well-watered hill country in that they visit regular drinking pools towards evening. This habit is very common among birds of the dry inland plains where they have to travel great distances from their feeding grounds to the nearest water, but for birds of our area it is most unusual, and for photographic purposes most convenient. As I am spending my first full winter in a new place, I have been watching with interest to see if the local Gang-gangs would follow the normal practice of their kind. After hearing their harsh calls from the same area of bush on several nights I decided to investigate, but the only water I could find was a small pool caught in a sheet of bark, so I then placed a container of water on the spot in the hope that the birds would use it. Closer observation later on showed that they were ignoring the water provided, but were drinking at a hollow tree some sixty feet from the ground. Having made previous unsuccessful attempts to photograph Gang-gangs up trees I was a bit dubious of my prospects, but this set-up looked more promising. The wind had blown across into the tree a long Silver-top spar up which I could scramble with the aid of nails and timber spikes, and there was a branch adjacent to the hollow upon which I could set my camera. On the previous occasion I had to set my camera out on the end of a board, and I think it was the prominent position of the camera rather than the camera itself that frightened the birds away. With everything set up each evening for the following fortnight, and the birds arriving on time and showing no fear of the camera even when the flashlight went off, I was able to obtain a number of colour slides of the Gang-gangs, and also some of the Crimson Rosellas and Striated Thornbills, which were casual visitors to the drinking hollow. An anti-climax was reached however on my last visit to the area when I observed the Gang-gangs to be gathered in a small flock, and not as one or two pairs as at the drinking hollow, and that now the birds have decided to descend to the container of water which I had provided, so that after my strenuous efforts, it seems that photos of these birds can be obtained in a much easier if less exciting manner.

I will conclude with an account of my attempts to photograph a male Lyre-bird performing on his mound, for although in general it is difficult to observe Lyre-birds in this area, let alone photograph them, in certain circumstances photography is not impossible.

Having toiled quietly in the same area of bush for the past year I suspect that the resident Lyre-birds have observed my presence on numerous occasions when I had no idea that they were about. Whether or not they have reached the conclusion that I am a harmless sort of character, the male bird seems to be much more approachable than others in the district. After finding a mound with a convenient stump nearby on which the camera could be placed to obtain a good view without disturbing the surrounding vegetation, I was able to take several shots by setting up my camera and then continuing my work near at hand until I heard the bird in the vicinity, and then going to a position where I could operate the camera when the bird seemed to be actually on the mound. The poor results obtained were partly due to the need to take the photo without seeing the bird, and also I am afraid,

to a certain lack of skill on the part of the photographer, but were not due to any excessive wariness on the part of the bird. It appears that Lyre-birds become friendly with long association with men as long as they are not unduly interfered with, and their habitat is not destroyed.

F.J.

ORCHIDS- CONTINUED.-- by Jim Poterson.

This has been a very successful month for Orchid seekers- twelve different species have been sighted, two of which may not have been found in the Latrobe Valley before.

Five members of the Greenhood family have been seen:-

The Tiny Greenhood (*Pterostylis parviflora*) which has been found in flower since January, was last seen at Traralgon South, and has by now ceased flowering. The Trim Greenhood (*Pterostylis concinna*), in contrast to the Tiny Greenhood, has only one erect small flower. A characteristic of this species is the vee shaped piece missing from the end of its labellum. It has been in flower at Traralgon South, and was also found by Mr. Homan on the Walhalla Road several miles out of Moe.

The Nodding Greenhood (*Pterostylis nutans*) with its single nodding flower is now very common. These usually grow in colonies, sometimes hundreds in a group. An excellent example of these colonies can be found on the Jemralang West Road, in an area left by a road deviation, about 400 yards north of the Jemralang Junction Post Office.

The Tall Greenhood (*Pterostylis longifolia*) can also be found in this spot. This species has leaves up the stem as against the basal rosette of the Nodding. It has a number of flowers on the one stem, and in this area has been seen up to two feet high. It does not grow in colonies and will be found scattered throughout the district.

The Cobra Greenhood (*Pterostylis grandiflora*) has a single large flower and has leaves up its stem. It is one of the nicest greenhoods, and is worthy of its alternative name, Superb Greenhood. We believe this season's findings are the first in this area. Single specimens were found near the Morwell tip, and the Yinnar Tip! Mr. Jones has found about a dozen of them scattered throughout the Boola area. A feature of this species is its scattered appearances which, together with its time of flowering, could account for it not being seen sooner.

The Red Beak (*Lyperanthus nigricans*) can be found about 300 yards south of the highway deviation at Hearn's Oak. Leaves of this species are common but it is usually found in flower after a fire. This area is a good example of this; leaves in an unburnt area are flowerless and yet a nearby burnt area has dozens of buds and flowers.

The Autumn Bird Orchid (*Chiloglottis reflexa*) was found in flower by Mr. Homan on the Old Sale Road a few miles out from Moe, only after a very intense search. The light green double leaf of this species is fairly common, but the flowers seem hard to locate. This family has a most attractive labellum, and it is the shape of, and the growth upon which helps determine the species. This particular flower has a gland on the labellum which is reflexed or bent back towards the base of the labellum, hence the name 'reflexa'.

(To be continued).

J.P.

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LATROBE VALLEY FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB.

NEWSLETTER NO. 10.

August 1964.

Dear Fellow Field Naturalists,

It is pleasing to report a wealth of interesting, and valuable material available for this Newsletter, and disappointing that some of it must be deferred until a later date.

Mr. John Nicholas has provided a comprehensive report on the Geology Field Day led by Mr. Alan Coulson, representing a tremendous amount of work, which it is intended will be duplicated separately for distribution to members.

Miss Galbraith has kindly sent a page from 'A Traveller's Diary', which will be appreciated by members with a certain feeling of envy of her experiences. We also welcome a first contribution from that busy and versatile Field Naturalist, Mrs. E. Lyndon.

EXCURSION SATURDAY 29th. AUGUST. by Miss N. Rossiter.

This will be to the Sale Common where, IN THE MORNING, Mr. Roberts of the Fisheries and Wild Life Department will tell us something of the Department's work in this area, and the abundant bird life on the swamp may be studied. After lunch by the Latrobe River, the party, under the leadership of Mr. Frank Jones, will visit Lake Guthrie to see a variety of water birds at close quarters.

Members who have field glasses should bring them.

Those needing transport should contact any of the following at least two days before the excursion:-

Traralgon:	Mr. K. Eldridge.	Trar. 7 2503.
Morwell:	Mrs. Kinniburgh.	Mor. 4 3085.
Yallourn:	Miss N. Rossiter.	Yall. 5 2392.
Moe:	Mr. S. Belgraver.	179 Lloyd Street, Moe.
Tyers:	Mr. F. Jones.	

Times of departure:

Moe -	8.15 a.m. from Post Office.
Yallourn -	8.30 a.m. from Post Office.
Morwell -	8.45 a.m. from Town Hall.
Traralgon -	9 a.m. from Methodist Church, Princes Highway.

Members travelling direct to Sale should meet the main party at the Swing bridge, Latrobe River on the South Gippsland Highway about 4 miles south of Sale at 10 a.m..

During the Spring there will be two excursions each month.

The first one in September will be on Saturday 12th., when Mr. Ken Eldridge will lead the excursion to Boola Forest and Mt. Erica to study eucalypts.

Pick-up Times: 9 a.m. at Moe Post Office, Yallourn P.O., Morwell Town Hall, and Traralgon P.O.

9.30 a.m. All meeting at Tyers.

The route from Tyers will be along the Tyers-Walhalla Road to Parker's Corner, then along the Thomson Valley Road to the Narrows (about 4 miles from Parker's Corner) for lunch. In the afternoon - to Ezzard's Mill No. 1 and turning left there along the forestry road to the car park.

N. Rossiter.

EXCURSION SECRETARY.

WATTLES by Miss Nancy Rossiter.

Wattles are blooming in the bush and along the river banks, and it seems a good time to try to identify the common species which grow in this locality.

Few people will have a comprehensive handbook on Victorian flora to enable them to pick out the finer points in identification, but there are several obvious characteristics to look for which can help:-

Foliage: 1. Feathery leaves ,
or

2. Phyllodes - these are usually called leaves and do the work of leaves but are really flattened stems.

- Flowers: (a) Globular heads
or
(b) Cylindrical spikes.

On the bases of these characteristics the table below groups nine of the common wattles growing in the Haunted Hills - Yallourn - Tyers area :-

	1.	2.	3.
Flowers.	Feathery Leaves.	Phyllodes over $1\frac{1}{2}$ " Long.	Phyllodes Under $1\frac{1}{2}$ " Long.
(a) Globular Heads.	Silver Wattle. Black Wattle.	Blackwood. Straight Wattle. Varnish Wattle.	Hedge Wattle.
(b) Cylindrical Spikes	-	Narrow-leafed Wattle. White Sallow Wattle.	Prickly Moses.

A more detailed description is necessary to distinguish the members within a group from one another:-

Group 1(a) - Feathery leaves and globular heads:

- (i) Silver Wattle, *Acacia dealbata*, L, dealba- whitened - refers to the whitish appearance of stems and foliage. A spreading tree with bright yellow flowers.
- (ii) Black Wattle, *Acacia mearnsii*. A tall tree with darker and greener leaves than Silver Wattle, and the young growth is yellowish bronze. Flowers are a pale creamy yellow and appear much later in the spring than (i).

Group 2(a) - Phyllodes over $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, globular heads:

- (i) Blackwood, *Acacia melanoxylon*, Gr. melano - black, xylon - wood. A large tree with dense foliage and thickish leaves 2 - 4 inches long, and up to 1 inch broad, with several main veins. Flowers, creamy yellow.
- (ii) Straight Wattle, *Acacia stricta*. A shrub, 2 - 6 feet, with stiff erect branchlets and rather dull green leaves with one main vein. Flower heads, one to three, on short stalks from the leaf bases.
- (iii) Varnish Wattle, *Acacia verniciflua*, O. Fr, vernis - varnish. A spreading shrub or small tree similar to (ii) but the foliage has a shiny appearance and is sticky when young. The leaves have two main veins and the branches are often arching.

Group 2(b) - Phyllodes over $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, flowers in spikes:

- (i) Narrow-leafed Wattle, *Acacia mucronata*, L. mucro - small point. A light graceful shrub, 4 - 8 feet. Leaves are usually under $\frac{1}{4}$ inch wide and 6 inches or more long; the small point at the end is sometimes recurved. Light yellow loose spikes.
- (ii) White Sallow Wattle, *Acacia floribunda*. This Wattle has been planted extensively around Yallourn but is a native of East Gippsland. Its habit of growth distinguishes it from the Narrow-leafed Wattle. It is a small tree with dense foliage, the branches drooping almost to the ground. The leaves are usually shorter and the creamy yellow spikes longer and paler than (i). Both the spikes and the flowers on them are much more numerous than in *A. mucronata* - hence the name 'floribunda'.

Group 3 - Phyllodes under $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches long:

(a) Globular Heads:

Hedge Wattle, *Acacia armata*, L. armed - with thorns. A somewhat straggly shrub, leaves $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 inch long with a sharp point and prickly stipules. Flowers, deep golden yellow.

(b) Flowers in Spikes:

Prickly Moses, Acacia verticillata, L. whorl - leafed. A slender shrub with spine-like leaves about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch long in circles around the stem. The flower spikes are lemon yellow and from nearly globular to 1 inch long.

N.T. Rossiter.

GENERAL MEETING JULY 22nd. 'GEOLOGY OF THE LATROBE VALLEY' by MR. A. COULSON described by Mr. S.R. Scott.

The geologist is often hampered in his field work by the overlying mantle of top-soil and vegetation which hides the bare bones of his subject, so while the botanist may deplore the wide-spread excavation which goes on in the Latrobe Valley, it is a boon to the geologist.

At the July Meeting, Mr. A. Coulson, an enthusiastic amateur geologist, showed us that he has made good use of these man-made opportunities for study. Road cuttings, open cut mines, quarries and natural outcrops of rock were all used to illustrate points in his address on 'the Geology of the Latrobe Valley'.

In his introductory remarks Mr. Coulson outlined the work of the main branches of geological study - mineralogy, petrology, structural geology, palaeontology, and stratigraphy. Geological maps were shown illustrating the surface geology of Gippsland and, in more detail, of the Central Latrobe Valley Area. With the aid of lucid diagrams we were shown where rocks of various ages from 500 million years to the recent past may be found. The oldest rocks, Ordovician and Silurian slates and mudstones are to be found in the Walhalla area. These are followed by wide-spread Devonian limestones. Coming further south we find the Mesozoic conglomerates, sandstones and mudstones which comprise a large part of the South Gippsland Highlands. They are separated from rocks of similar age in the foothills of the Dividing Range by the graben of the Latrobe Valley. With reference to these beds Mr. Coulson spoke of the difficulty of correlating these Mesozoic sediments in the absence of index fossils, and referred to recent work on fossilised pollens which indicates that some at least of the 'Jurassic' beds may really belong to the Cretaceous period.

The Tertiary deposits of the Latrobe Valley include the economically important brown coal measures and the sands, gravels and clays which overlies them. These humble 'overburden' materials bear evidence of the tremendous amount of erosion which must have taken place during their formation in the huge freshwater lake which once occupied their present site. Their composition points to their origin in the mountains which even then existed to the north and which must have been of enormous height.

Igneous rocks are represented by the granites of the Baw Baws and Wilson's Promontory, the latter striking even the casual observer with their porphyritic crystals and large xenoliths, aptly described as being pieces of 'undigested country rock'; the Early Tertiary basalts which give us the rich red soils at Narracan, Thorpdale, Erica and other places underlie the coal measures and are of considerable economic value, being quarried for 'bluestone'.

Mr. Coulson's admirably chosen slides showed us some unfamiliar places as well as putting many familiar ones in a new light.

S.R.S.

NOTES ON A SPINY ANT-EATER by Mrs. E. Lyndon.

He strolled into our yard one day in Mid-March, a small stranger with a very determined air, the smallest of his kind that we had ever beheld, and we were immediately enchanted. A creature bearing the formidable names of Tachyglossus aculeata aculeata. Along with most country people, a porcupine or echidna is no novelty to us, for this is one of the hardier native animals that has learned to live with man and to survive in even heavily settled country.

They may be familiar animals. Alright! But what do we really know about the species? We turned to Ellis Troughton for more information about the 'Furred Animals of Australia', and soon found that neither 'porcupine' nor 'echidna' was a suitable common name for our visitor. The true porcupine of Europe and America is a rodent, kin to the rats and the rabbits. The Latin

word from which echidna is derived applies to a well known genus of cels. 'Spiny Ant-eater' is now the name generally accepted and it is fully descriptive. Our Ant-eaters are surely amongst the world's strangest animals, being egg-laying mammals or monotremes, whose nearest living relative is the Platypus.

Our small one was only about one quarter the size of an adult, but fully armored and equipped with all the instincts of his kind. He, (here I must explain that when writing for scientific journals it is proper at all times to speak of the fauna as 'it', but we felt that this small person with the strong but lovable character just didn't belong under the heading of 'it', and, so for lack of confirmation of his, or its sex, it became 'he' to us). He needed a name, and to familiarize ourselves with that correct but difficult name Tachyglossus, we tried it out. Tachyglossus, rapid tongue. How apt! And aculeata aculeata? You're right! the spines are indeed sharp and pointed. From Tachyglossus it came down to Tachy-tongue and finally to just 'Tachy'.

Our garden paths and brick chimneys have long been plagued with ants, so a perambulating ant-disposal unit was the answer to a house-wife's dream and every means was sought to coax Tachy to stay about the house. We soon found that he loathed confinement of any kind, even temporary prisons furnished with ant-laden logs and bowls of milk, and bantam eggs pierced with sucking holes. He simply walked the perimeter of his enclosure, round and round, pausing only to dabble in the milk dish and to take a few sucks at the egg, for eggs and milk were his favorite dishes, and usually when engaged in imbibing such delicacies Tachy was deaf to all outside sound and movement. So only when interested visitors were coming to see him was he brought in and kept for a few hours. A saucer of milk was eagerly lapped up and the saucer polished by that long pink ribbon of tongue. Two saucers. Three! But then Tach would start to swell visibly and to shiver like a gorged poddy calf, so on the principle that enough was as good as a feast, only enough was preferred. A bantam's egg with a suitable hole pierced in the side was much enjoyed and drained to the last drop. Do not think however, that Ant-eaters are nest robbers. An egg held no interest unless breached for him. A little sausage mince spread on the chopping board was always appreciated and every skerrick cleaned up. It is quite an experience to have ones fingers licked by such an odd animal. He became used to being swooped upon and picked up to be carried inside for a feed. Caught suddenly or startled in any way, down would come the protective mantle of spines, the small bare head and front feet tucked well underneath, only the long hind claws visible. Try to insert a finger under the mantle and it comes tight on that side. Try the other side and the process is instantly reversed. Being so small and only one pound in weight it was not difficult or painful to raise him, although the small 'hands' gripping the grass and leaves always brought up a fistful of mother earth. Often brought home at lunchtime, he would drain his ration of milk and then wander around the kitchen floor inspecting the various legs of the table and the diners, presumably for signs of ants. He showed a penchant for climbing up the narrow space between heavy furniture and the wall, squeezing himself quite flat if necessary. Arrived at the top he would roll ungracefully off the slippery surface to land upon his back upon the floor, kicking furiously like an overturned turtle. Some weeks if regularly fed his weight would increase by five or six ounces only to drop again if he missed for a week.

It was a great pleasure to watch Tachy work in the field. The tiny eyes seem very short sighted and the sense of smell attuned mainly to ants, as it does not warn of human proximity. At the sudden appearance of the dog, or at the sound of human footfall or voice the ant-eater goes to earth, scuffling into the hard surface. Stand perfectly still and in a very few moments his head will emerge, listen carefully, and though a large boot may be standing each side of his body he will cast caution to the winds and resume business with a will. It is a delight to stand thus and watch the small bulldozer scratch and strain at an ant hole, every muscle brought into play as the long rubbery snout is forced into the burrow. Then follows a deliciously relaxed period while the long tongue is busy amongst the ants. Ants swarm out in panic until he is absolutely covered with them. A few casual licks round the top of the hole and he moves on, the colony not destroyed but only thinned out a little.

Much dirt is said to be taken in along with the main dish of ants, perhaps to aid in the digestive processes of the stomach.

Being a homestead site for many years our hillock is liberally besprinkled with the buried wood and stones amongst the grass, and ants are perhaps amongst the most plentiful of a varied post fauna. All through the

autumn Tachy's excavations were to be seen all around. His immediate whereabouts could often be pinpointed by a staring group of cattle, which are apparently tolerated by ant-eaters. Period of greatest activity was generally in the late afternoon, very rarely was he to be seen working before one o'clock, especially if the grass was wet until late in the morning. The little bear-like figure paced with square-gaited action from paddock to paddock at quite a brisk walking pace, pausing here and there to sample a likely spot. Taken up from the day's chosen working place, fed some milk and set down elsewhere, perhaps in a different direction, Tachy would soon be found right back where he had started that morning, finishing the job at which he had been disturbed. Only once did I find his night's resting place. Poking along the dry side of a paling fence the dry earth before my feet suddenly flinched!

We made a point of bringing him home and releasing him under the house after a feed, hoping the dry earth and warm chimney bricks might entice him to spend the winter in shelter should he find it necessary to hibernate. Certainly there is no sign of him since this very cold weather set in. There is always the hayshed, however, and various nooks and crannies under old concrete floors. We hope, when warmer days are here again, to see this very welcome addition to our domestic animals once more.

Adult ant-eaters undoubtedly work all through the winter, for they are often to be seen in the wettest bush and the signs of their industry are there for all to see. One wonders if the small ones fall victim to hungry foxes. They are so seldom seen. Ours had little skill in digging into hard ground, and once rolled over would be very vulnerable in the soft underparts and bare head. I must confess to a certain anxiety for the safety of this engaging little wildling who wouldn't be caged at any price.

E. Lyndon.

NOTES FROM THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING by The Secretary, Mr. S. Bolgravor.

Arrangements for a combined excursion with the Field Naturalists' Club of Victoria on Sunday the 15th. November were discussed. It was decided to have lunch at the Moondarra Dam and from there to travel to Yallourn North through the hills making eucalypts a special study.

A Sub-Committee consisting of Miss N. Rossiter and Messrs. K.G. Eldridge, E.H. Homann and J. Peterson was appointed to make more detailed arrangements at a later date.

A letter of thanks was received from the Matriculation Class of the Methodist Ladies' College for the hospitality received from the Club on the Geology Excursion.

It was decided to ask the Minister for Lands and Conservation to consider the advisability of preserving areas of natural bush adjacent to pine plantations, where it was necessary to clear for the planting of pines, so ensuring that bird-life in the vicinity would be maintained.

S.B.

TRAVELLER'S DIARY - (Victoria to Western Australia)
by Miss Jean Galbraith.

There is so much to tell about our journey by road from Frankston in Victoria to Geraldton in Western Australia that all I can do is to pick out a few highlights on the journey via Strathfieldsaye, Red Cliffs, Port Pirie, Port Augusta, Port Lincoln, Ceduna, Norseman, Kalgoorlie, and Northam to Geraldton.

They will be small windows on the bright spots of our journey. For you the spaces between will be empty, like blank walls, but for us they were a panorama of changing scenes - new vegetation - new mountains - new country. The 'windows' come in this order -

The warm welcome from our ex-President of L.V.F.N.C., Graham Marshall and his wife Denise, with whom we spent part of an afternoon and our first night. Graham drove us to the Bendigo Whipstick where we saw the rare Acacia felxifolia, only 18" high with little narrow wedge shaped leaves and fragrant primrose flowers, in full blossom at the end of July. The Whipstick is a southern incursion of Mallee vegetation with typical richly varied Mallee flora under Mallee eucalypts which are never very tall and have several stems rising from a thick rootstock (lignotuber)..

Next Window - A Lowan, beautifully marked with white bars on chocolate and grey, walking along the roadside at Hattah as unafraid as if we had not been driving past, only two yards away.

Again, the many colours of saltbush between Redcliffs and Port Augusta - Bluebush, softly blue-white, Chenopodium, silvery green-white; Kochia with rosy winged fruits; , with little berry like flat fruits, tomato-red. A pair of Major Mitchell cockatoos, pink-crested, by the roadside. Flowers on the way to Port Augusta - Scarlet Mint-bush; Blue Dampiera, almost leafless, with silver-white stems - masses of rosy dwarf boronia; and Wattles, bright golden but most fiercely thorny.....

The Eyre Highway between Ceduna and Norseman, where it crosses the lower edge of the Nullarbor, with saltbush again in all its many colours; Mallee eucalypts with ragged bark on the trunks; or silver-white trunks flecked with grey; or coppery trunks warm in the sunshine ... and far to the South sand dunes as white as clouds.

After Norseman - flowers - countless flowers though in early July there were only odd blooms out on most plants, and sometimes none.

Of these, more later - I hope!

J.B.

PREVIEW OF THE EXCURSION TO THE SALE COMMON by
Mr. Frank Jones.

The next Club outing, the main object of which is to observe water birds, will be to the Sale Common and Lake Guthridge. It may be of some help towards the success of the trip if some information is given here as to the birds we can expect to see, and some hints are given on the identification of the more confusing species.

The Sale Common is at present flooded with the winter flow from the Thomson and Latrobe Rivers, and with the water from the snow-fields on the upper reaches of the river yet to come, the Common should remain flooded to a shallow depth for some weeks making an ideal feeding ground for the water birds now congregated there in large flocks. The most numerous species present are the Straw-necked and the White Ibises feeding in the shallow water, and the adjacent grass lands among the Ibises are a fair number of Egrets, and a few White-faced Herons and White-necked Herons, while flying overhead or gathered on the shore or the small islands, flocks of silver Gulls may be seen. The Black Duck and the Chestnut Teal are commonly seen in this area, and probably also the Grey Teal, although on a recent tour of this place it was difficult to be sure that this species was present due to the similarity of the Grey Teal to the female Chestnut Teal. Musk Ducks are usually observed as solitary birds swimming well out from the shore, and when disturbed will dive and remain underwater for a considerable time, and reappear some distance away. This Duck often has a fleshy lobe beneath its head giving it a very odd appearance.

The Little Grebe, the bigger Crested Grebe, the Swamp Hen, the Moor-hen, and the Coot are among the many other birds which should be seen, and which, owing to lack of space, further details cannot be given in this newsletter.

F.J.

President:

Mr. K. Eldridge,
Lafayette Street, Traralgon.

Secretary:

Mr. S. Belgraver,
179 Lloyd Street, Moe.

Hon. Editor.

G.T. Scanlan,
L.V.C. Hospital,
YALLOURN.

LATROBE VALLEY FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB

Excursion to Boola Boola Forests and Mount Erica to study eucalypts.
12th September, 1964. Leader: K.G. Eldridge.

Although all gum trees look the same at first, it is easy for the beginner to learn two or three species - say *E. radiata*, *E. obliqua* and *E. sieberi*. All we need to do is observe bark, buds, fruits, juvenile leaves and adult leaves.

The 600 or so species of eucalypts can be divided into five sections -

Renantherae - stringybarks, peppermints etc.;
Macrantherae - red gums, blue gums, etc.;
boxes and ironbarks;
bloodwoods;
mallees.

Within each section all the species can be cross-pollinated with each other but no species of one section has been crossed with one of another section. The members of each section share certain characters of anther shape, leaf veins, fruit structure, and wood.

The genus *Eucalyptus* is under constant study by botanists who sometimes feel obliged to change the specific names. Three of the names on this list have been changed since we first held the excursion two years ago. Even the name *Eucalyptus* is not permanent. *Symphomyrtus* will probably be used for all the eucalypts except stringybarks, peppermints, ashes, and a few others of the section now known as Renantherae (kidney-shaped pollen boxes), which will still be called *Eucalyptus*.

The excursion will demonstrate the large number of species of *Eucalyptus* to be found in one area and will show how the species grow together in various combinations according to type of soil, altitude and rainfall.

The species in the list are arranged according to the altitude where they grow. The ones with a description are those most likely to be seen on this excursion. Red gum is found on the heavy clays of the Gippsland plains and along rivers. Boxes, ironbarks, mealy stringy & peppermints grow on the poor soils of the low foothills. On the higher foothills with better soil and more rain we find on the hillsides six stringybarks, messmate, grey gum and blue gum, with silvertop on the ridges and manna gum in the gullies. Between 1500 ft and 3000 ft is our best forest which is a pure stand of one species, mountain ash. Here the soil is deep and friable and rainfall over 40 ins. From 3000 ft to 4000 ft. the hardy alpine ash and shining gum grow with winter snow covering the ground for several weeks. Above 4000 ft the winter is so severe that only snow gums will survive.

E. tereticornis - forest red gum

Some rough dark grey bark at the butt, the rest shed annually and smooth. Buds have rounded bases and elongated horn-shaped opercula. Wood is red.

E. bridgesiana - apple box or butt-butt.

Soft short fibred bark, persistent, distinctive round, grey-green juvenile leaves. Adult leaves long and green.

E. melliodora. - yellow box.

Bark is dark & fibrous on outside, soft and yellow inside, persistent on trunk, shed from branches. The best honey tree of all the eucalypts. Excellent firewood.

E. polyanthemos - red box.

"Box" bark. Rounded, grey-green adult leaves are distinctive. Very durable wood.

E. ovata - swamp gum

E. sideroxylon - red ironbark.

Common near Cowwarr and Toongabbie.

E. radiata - narrow leaved peppermint.

Finely fibrous bark persists on the trunk and branches.

E. dives - broad-leaved peppermint.

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E.cephalocarpa - mealy stringybark.

Found also on the roadside between Morwell and Hernes Oak. Formerly E.cinerea.

E.obliqua - messmate, stringybark.

Bark can be rubbed into a soft stringy ball. Juvenile and adult leaves are "obliqua". It is necessary to compare fruits to be sure of the stringybarks.

E.consideniana - yertchuk or prickly stringybark.

Bark is prickly on hands when rubbed. Seems to be a "poor relation" of E.sieberi.

E.sieberi - silvertop ash.

Furrowed hard bark, like ironbark on old trees. Upper branches smooth and gleaming white.

E.baxteri - brown stringybark.

E.scabra - white stringybark.

E.macrorryncha - red stringybark.

E.muelleriana - yellow stringybark.

E.globulus - blue gum.

E.bicostata - blue gum.

E.cypellocarpa - mountain grey gum.

Smooth greyish bark with a rough stocking at the butt. Buds and fruits with slight ribs, larger than E.nitens. Long leaves. (The name E.goniocalyx formerly used for this species is not applied to long-leaved box, formerly E.elaeophora).

E.viminalis - manna gum

E.regnans x obliqua (hybrid)

Tall and usually slender trees. Stocking of soft stringybark for 10 to 20 ft., remainder white and peeling off in strips. Sometimes hard to distinguish from E.viminalis, unless buds, fruits or juvenile leaves can be seen.

E.delegatensis - alpine ash

E.nitens - shining gum.

A close relative of E.eypellocarpa with very small fruits.

E.glaucescens - Tingaringi gum.

A rare species, somewhat similar to E.nitens but fruits are large and glaucous (dusty blue-grey), and juvenile leaves are round.

E.pauciflora - Snow gum

Reference books

Know your own trees

R.T.Patton 5/-

Honey flora of Victoria

Dept. of Agric. 1/6

Forest Trees of Australia

F & T.B. Canberra, £2 (approx.)

A key to the eucalypts

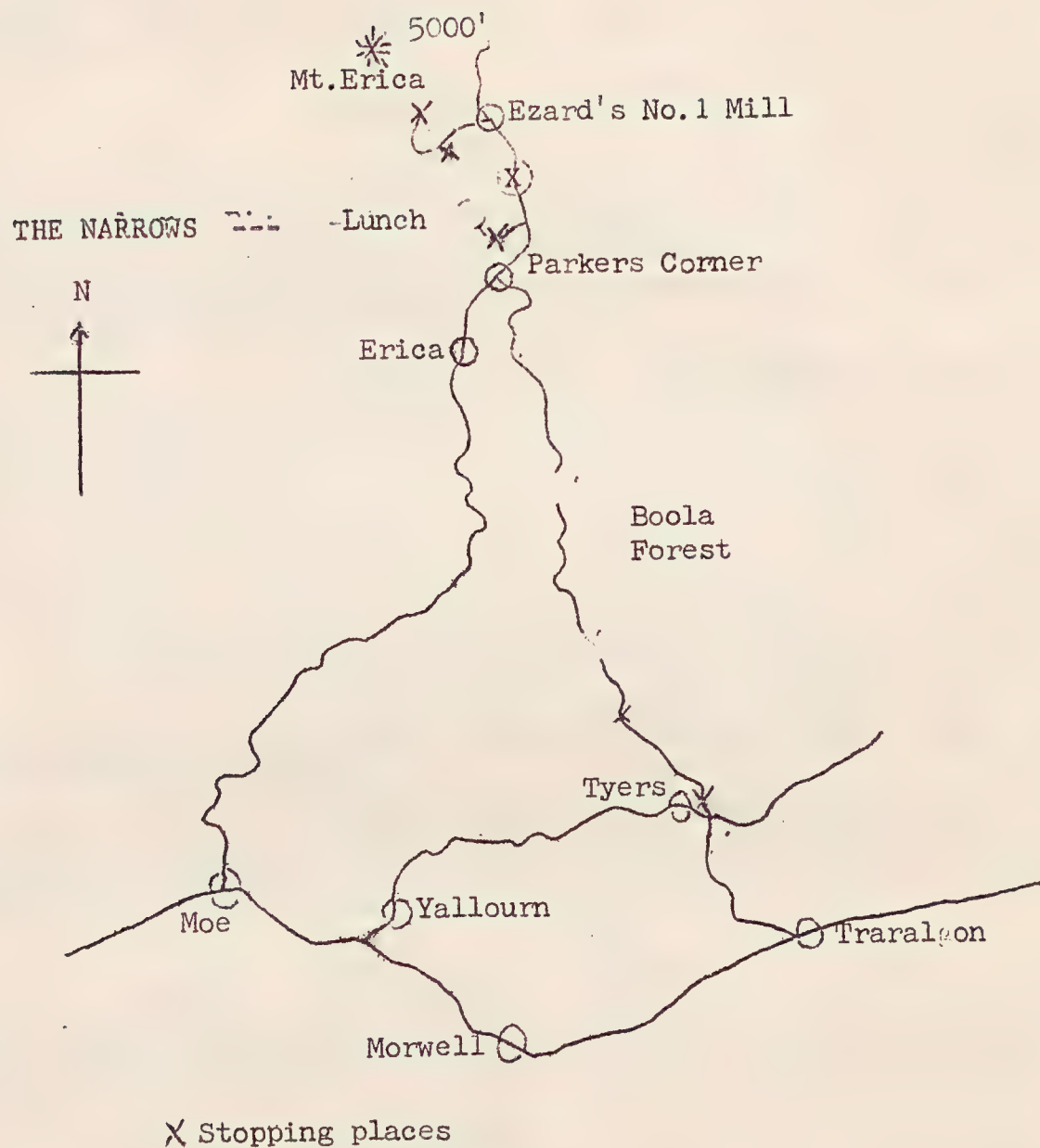
W.F.Blakeley 2nd ed. £2 (approx)

Illustrations of buds and fruits

F & T.B. leaflet 63.

The natural occurrence of the eucalypts.

F. & T.B. Leaflet 65 (2nd ed.).



ROAD MAP OF LVFNC EXCURSION AREA.

Dear Fellow Field Naturalists,

Members will agree that the contributions in this eleventh issue of the monthly newsletter maintain the variety and high standard set by the earlier issues. The active and informed members who provide the articles make it possible to continue, to the interest and profit of members generally, a publication which was commenced (with some trepidation) on an experimental basis.

LYRE BIRD AT NEAR TYERS JUNCTION. By the Editor.

A Lyre Bird sits on a nest built in a most conspicuous position on the Tyers Junction Road about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the Moe-Walhalla Road. The nest is on top of a cutting about 6 feet above the roadway, providing the brooding hen with a close view of passing traffic, including timber trucks and, during the recent school holidays, numerous Boy Scouts on their comings and goings, to her apparent unconcern.

Stopping my car a little distance away, I climbed down the hill and up to a position below the nest at the edge of the road. At my clumsy movements, the bird flew off the nest, but only to a patch of open small bush nearby, where she scratched and fed, cocking a wary eye, but otherwise not unduly apprehensive. Returning later from the Scout camp, I stopped the car alongside the nest, and the bird was not disturbed until the car door was opened. A week later (Sunday the 20th) there was no sign of the bird, either on the nest or in the vicinity, but the single egg, of a colour somewhat like a dark battleship grey with dark irregular splotches, was warm to the touch, so it is assumed that the hen was still brooding.

GENERAL MEETING WEDNESDAY 26TH. AUGUST. Report by the Secretary, Mr. S. Belgraver.

The first half of the Meeting gave lively discussion about several matters, especially those concerning the possibility of creating reserves in our district, as on Silcox Hill near Morwell; the Edward Hunter Pool area in Moe; and the area at Traralgon South.

After a short interval, two of the members, Messrs. E. Homann and J. Peterson, introduced the subject of Orchids, illustrated with beautiful slides made by the latter. All members enjoyed the lecture, and Miss B. Kemp moved a vote of thanks to both which was underlined by well-earned applause.

EXCURSIONS.

The monthly Excursion on the 26th. September will take us to the heathlands near Dutson. The leader, Mr. Auchterlonie, has asked us to assemble at the Methodist Church in Traralgon at 10 a.m., and it is planned to travel to Longford and Dutson, leaving the highway at Rosedale. Lunch at Dutson and then, after following the South Gippsland Highway for some distance, a return will be made via Willung.

The following Excursion will be on the 10th. October, assembling at 2 p.m. at the junction of McDonald Track and the Princes Highway near Hernes Oak. It is hoped to study the flora at the south end of McDonald Track.

SEPTEMBER EXECUTIVE MEETING.

The Executive Committee met on Monday 14th. September, and discussed, among other things, a letter from the City of Moe which is negotiating with the Railway Commissioners for the purchase of the Edward Hunter Pool area. In due course the Club will make a survey of the flora and fauna to be found in the area.

A circular was received from the C.A.E. regarding the Spring School to be held at Mt. Beauty from the 24th. to the 31st. October. Accommodation is to be provided at the Chalet, Mt. Beauty, and the inclusive charge is £22.10.0. The following groups are to be catered for:- Geology; Botany; Bird Life; Practical Bushcraft; Practical Painting and Sketching; and Creative Writing, each led by a competent Tutor. The C.A.E. brochure is available from the Secretary.

Mr. Eldridge reported that a Committee of Management, with himself as President, had been appointed for the Traralgon South Reserve, and that plans were in hand for fencing the area.

Two letters from the Field Naturalist Club of Victoria regarding Car Stickers were discussed, and the Council of the F.N.C.V. will be informed that the purpose of the stickers is to provide a means for recognition of and assistance to fellow field naturalists in our common interest.

About 60 copies of the comprehensive report by Mr. John Nicholas on the Geological Field Day led by Mr. Coulson are available, and interested members may obtain them from the Secretary.

For the benefit of those interested, it is advised that the next Meeting of the Executive will be held at the home of Miss Nancy Rossiter, on Monday 12th. October.

S.B.

EXCURSION TO BOOLA FOREST AND MT. ERICA. 12TH. SEPT.

Subject 'Eucalypts' led by Mr. K.G. Eldridge, and described by Mrs. S. Padfield.

Mr. Eldridge, with his usual thoroughness provided each member of the Excursion with printed general notes on the Eucalypts growing in the area to be visited; a list of those to be seen and described and their characteristics; and a plan of the area with access roads.

At the first stop *E. Radiata*, *E. Obliqua* and *E. Sieberi* were studied, and at the Nature Reserve further along the Tyers-Walhalla Road several varieties of native flora were seen. The party made a short stop along Finn's Track where Mr. Eldridge described the Mountain Ash (*E. regnans*) and Messmate Stringybark (*E. obliqua*). The way was then on to the Walhalla Road to Parker's Corner where the convoy stopped to view Mt. Erica snowline, and the various stages of regrowth of the vegetation after fires.

Lunch was had at the 'Narrows', and several species of *Acacia* were found there, one of which could not be identified, and was to be sent to the Melbourne Herbarium. Journeying along the Thomson Valley Road, the party turned off at Ezzard's No. 1. and followed the track which leads to Mt. Erica itself. Here were seen magnificent specimens of Mountain Ash, some of which were stated to be in the region of 250 feet. Also seen were Shining Gum (*E. nitens*) and Tingaringi Gum (*E. glaucescens*), near the turntable.

After a short discussion and afternoon tea, everybody returned homeward much refreshed after a most exhilarating day.

L.P.

EXCURSION TO SALE COMMON by Brian Cane. 29th. August.

After a wet and miserable morning we left our starting points headed for Sale and the Swing Bridge. Around Rosedale we saw the White Cockatoo (*Kakatoe galerita*), and some Water fowl on the dams and floodwaters. By the time we had reached Sale the sun was peeping through the clouds, and the most exciting thing for the children was crossing the road where the Latrobe River flooded over the South Gippsland Highway.

After crossing the water we stopped to watch the graceful Black Swan (*Cygnus atratus*) and the cygnets; the stately Plumed Egret (*Egretta intermedia*); and the busy Eastern Swamp Hen (*Porphyrio melanotus*). While most people were watching the birds, two young girls found a Red Fin trapped in a storm water drain. (It was returned to the waters).

We all drove slowly to the Swing Bridge where we saw a lot of Waterfowl; the White Ibis (*Threskiornis molucca*); Musk Duck (*Biziura lobata*); Chestnut Teal (*Anas castanea*); Little Grebe (*Podiceps ruficollis*); Hoary Headed Grebe (*P. poliocephalus*); Spur-winged Plover (*Lobibyx novae-hollandiae*); Silver Gull (*Larus novae-hollandiae*); Little Black Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax sulcirostris*); White Faced Heron (*Notophoxyx novae-hollandiae*); Freckled Duck (*Stictonetta naevosa*); Coot (*Fulica atra*); Straw Necked Ibis (*Threskiornis spinicollis*); the Swamp Harrier (*Circus approximans*); Royal Spoonbill (*Platalea regia*); and the Yellow-billed Spoonbill (*P. Flaviipes*).

Also seen were Swallows, Magpies, Magpie-Lark or Mud Lark, Ravens, Black and White Fantails, Currawongs, Kookaburras, Grey Thrush, Crimson Rosellas, and the Restless Flycatchers.

After lunch we returned to Sale's reed-studded Lake Guthridge, where the first things that caught the eye were eight large Pelicans (*Pelecanus conspicillatus*) and the numerous Coots; Dusky Moorehen (*Gallinula tenebrosa*); and Eastern Swamp hen which swam and fed on the Lake. While some were content to watch these birds, others of the more adventurous type set

out around the Lake and its back waters hunting out the shy birds, and were very successful with the ducks. We found the Black Duck (*Anas superciliosa*); Grey Teal (*A. gibberifrons*); Blue-winged Shoveller (*A. rhynchotis*); and the Freckled Duck (*Stictonetta naevosa*). After this most members left for home, but some made a round trip, visiting Victoria Park Zoo we saw Black and Mourn-tain Duck, a White Swan and two Grey Kangaroos (*Macropus major*). Then, heading for Glenmaggie Weir via Maffra we stopped for a 'cuppa', and watched the Little Pied Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax melanoleucus*), and the Little Black Cormorant (*P. sulcirostris*) diving in the billabongs.

Around the Weir two species of Wattle, the Early Black Wattle (*Acacia decurrans*) and the Golden Wattle (*A. dycnantha*) were in full bloom. Thus, after an exciting and interesting day, we returned home satisfied with a day well spent.

Brian Cane.

'ODD NOTES' from Mrs. E. Lyndon, Leongatha.

Amongst the debris thrown out of the Tarwin by the severe floods of July was the remains of a Platypus. It had evidently been dead some months as it was completely hairless. Indeed, at a glance it was hard to decide whether the peculiar shape was of fish, flesh or fowl. We sometimes see a Platypus on the river, although this stream, in a dry summer, can be very slow and smelly where it meanders through the flats, carrying farm and factory wastes. It is surely unusual to come across a dead platypus!

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As we drove out one day this week a Kookaburra rose from the long grass of the plantation carrying a young snake about two feet in length. Young Copperheads are not uncommon amongst the tufted grass clumps, but this was possibly the first snake of Spring. The Kookaburra flew to the nearest gum-tree and began to bang the snake against the limb. The head end was apparently swallowed first, in a proceeding that consisted of a series of Bang! Bang! Gulp! Gulp! movements. The snake made no noticeable resistance. Time prevented us from watching the whole affair which would evidently take more time than we were able to give it just then.

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This season there has been an abundant flowering of *Pterostylis grandiflora*, the Superb Greenhood, sometimes called the Cobra Greenhood, no doubt on account of the large puffy green and brown hood.

This handsome orchid has apparently disappeared from the Port Phillip Bay area, submerged in the tide of settlement. It was thought to be confined to the coastal belt in the vicinity of Wonthaggi, where we found it.

E.L.

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HOW TO LEARN MORE ABOUT BIRDS. by Mr. Frank Jones.

Whether they are noted for their beauty, friendliness, cheekiness, or just for their nuisance qualities, our native birds play an interesting part in our lives, and the importance of a greater knowledge of them, in common with all other new information, can not be assessed until that knowledge has been acquired. For instance, it may be asked what is the use of trying to find out where a certain bird goes in the winter-time, but the value of this little bit of information is not known until someone finds out just where the bird does go and how it lives during its stay in its winter habitat.

The way to a greater understanding of our birds seems to depend on a more detailed observation of their appearance, movements and habits. Fortunately, the study of birds in their natural environment is one of the most pleasant forms of recreation, and the activities of the people who do this sort of thing are limited only by the amount of time they can devote to it. The preservation of the birds themselves is a worthy objective, quite apart from their practical value which may be greater than at present thought.

The practice of banding birds is a valuable aid to many kinds of bird study, and although this method is restricted to persons possessing the required skill and knowledge of birds, it is a practice that should expand and provide a vast amount of new information on bird behaviour. The ability to recognize individual birds solves many of the problems concerned with their seasonal movements, longevity, change of plumage and breeding char-

acteristics.

Interesting possibilities of confirming certain theories come to mind if banding could be carried out in areas where considerable observation has already been done. The movements and breeding habits of the Yellow-winged Honey-eater (*Meliornis noviae-hollandiae*) should prove worthy of further study. From observations and the writings of ornithologists I have found that these birds will breed at almost any time of the year if conditions are suitable. The flowering of Banksias in winter attracts numbers of Honey-eaters, and if in conjunction with this abundant supply of nectar there is a spell of mild weather, the Yellow-winged species will commence nest-building and raising a family. More often than not at this time of the year the weather turns bad before the young ones are fledged, so that it is common to find deserted nests with eggs or dead young. However, it appears that with the approach of Spring and the flowering of other plants, and the increase of insect life, the same birds will mate again and build their nests in different areas where their food supply is now most abundant. With these opportunists of the bird world, only banding could prove that they are the same individuals that nested earlier in the Banksia country, or whether the same ones return to the same Banksia patch every winter and follow on to their other old nesting sites later in the year. This also raises the question of the importance of preserving the habitat of the birds. If the Banksia areas were destroyed it would be a blow to all the Honey-eaters, but the Yellow-winged may depend on the winter broods occasionally reared to maintain their numbers, so that it is conceivable that this bird, now common throughout its extensive range, could become rare or even extinct through the destruction of what is only a small portion of its habitat.

The effect of human influence on bird-life whether it be for good or bad, could be estimated by an extensive bird-banding programme. It is clear that although agricultural and industrial development is usually detrimental to wild life there are some interesting exceptions. An example of this is seen in the ever increasing pine plantations in this country. The pine forests of other countries are noted for their scarcity of bird-life, and when an area of our land is planted with pine most of the birds disappear, but one species, the Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus funereus*) finds the new environment very much to its liking. The diet of the Black Cockatoo consists of wood-borer grubs and the seeds of the native Hakeas, Casuarinas, and Banksias which it extracts from the hard woody fruits, but this bird has not been slow to learn that pine cones also contain edible seeds, and they can be seen spending the greater part of most days tearing the cones to pieces with their powerful bills.

Over the past few years I have been conducting my own small experiments to see if there may be some way of increasing bird-life by introducing some new factor into their surroundings by following the principle by which it is possible to greatly increase the productivity of some soils by the addition of trace elements. I have proved nothing, but have found that under some circumstances the small matter of the availability of suitable nest lining materials may have some bearing on the ability of birds to successfully raise their young. In the natural bush there seems to be a great shortage of fur and feathers, and in the Spring any piece of skin from a fox, rabbit or feral cat is regularly picked clean of fur before the nesting season is over. So that by providing such materials the birds may be helped in this way. To prove the effect of such experiments will require much careful observation over a long period, but in the meantime there is much satisfaction in studying the intricate ways of wild things.

F.J.

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WATTLES. The second of a series by Miss N. Rossiter.

Other Wattles are flowering in this area now, but they are not as common in the Yallourn locality as those mentioned in last month's Newsletter. Five of these are described below; all have globular heads, three have leaf-like phyllodes and two have phyllodes which look like spines. They fit into Groups 2 (a) and 3 (a) respectively of the table given previously.

Group 2 (a) - Phyllodes over 1½ inches long, globular heads:

- (i) Golden Wattle, (*Acacia pycnantha*), Gk. pycn = dense, anthos = flower.
A small tree with a profusion of large golden flower heads in racemes*

at the end of the branches; the gum-leaf-like phyllodes are up to 6 inches long.

(ii) Sweet Wattle. (Acacia suaveolens) = Sweet scented.

A shrub with narrow leaves usually 3-4 inches long and about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch wide; stems sometimes reddish. The flowers are pale yellow, in racemes, which when unexpanded are enclosed in conspicuous brown bracts. This is the most distinctive feature of the Sweet Wattle.

Growing on Purdy's Track, Haunted Hills.

(iii) Myrtle Wattle (Acacia myrtifolia) = so called because its leaves resemble some European myrtles. It is a low shrub with leaves that are more oval in shape than any of the other wattles described, being $1\frac{1}{2}$ -2 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches long. They have a prominent vein slightly off centre and a nerve-like margin. The stems are sometimes red-brown and the large yellow flowers are in racemes. Another distinctive feature of this wattle is the small number of flowers (2-4) in each head.

Growing on the Moo South Road.

Group 3 (a) - Phyllodes under $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches. globular heads.

(i) Spreading Wattle (Acacia diffusa).

This is sometimes erect but is usually a spreading shrub up to 5 feet, with thick rigid spine-like phyllodes $\frac{3}{4}$ -1 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches long and 2-3 m.m. wide with a sharp point. The numerous bright yellow flowers from the phyllode bases make this a very attractive shrub.

Growing on the Tyers-Cowarr Road.

(ii) Acacia Brownii = named after Victoria's first botanist, Robert Brown.

A low-growing spreading shrub under 3 feet. The phyllodes are spine-like and sharp-pointed as in the spreading wattle but are shorter - about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch long. The large golden yellow flower heads scattered along the branches have very slender stalks which are usually longer than the phyllodes.

Growing on the Newborough by-pass road.

* In a raceme, the flowers or flower heads in the case of wattles are arranged on the stem as in Lily of the Valley, the bottom flowers or heads opening first.

N.T. Rossitter.

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ORCHIDS. by Mr. Jim Peterson.

The first portion of this article continues from material which could not be included in full in the July issue, and in reading, should be related to that period where applicable.

The Gnat Orchid (Acianthus exortus) was at its best last month in all the spots we know. This species grows in colonies.

The Mosquito Orchid (A. reniformis) is now starting to flower. This too grows in colonies and can sometimes be found alongside a colony of A. exortus, such as at Clark's Road, north of Church Road, Hazelwood North. A quick identification is a check of the leaves, A. exortus has a heart-shaped leaf, green with red underneath. A. reniformis has green under its leaf. You will have noted that I have used the botanical name A. Exertus. This is referred to as the Gnat Orchid in some books and districts and in others as the Mosquito Orchid; similarly with A. reniformis. This is a very good example of how confusion can arise out of using the common name, whereas a species has only one botanical name by which it is known throughout the world irrespective of language.

The Helmet Orchid family are well represented in the district at the moment. These orchids are confusing in so much as it is difficult to apply the three petals and three sepals rule to them. This is because the dorsal sepal and the labellum have grown out of all proportion to the other petals and sepals. The dorsal sepal is the top of the helmet and the labellum makes up the remainder or 'jaw' of the flower. The other petals and sepals can be seen at the base of the labellum, looking like little white threads.

The Slaty Helmet (Corybas diemenicus) as its name implies has a slaty coloured top to its helmet whereas the Veined Helmet (C. dilutatus) has a dark reddish top to its helmet. Both have serrations on the

on the edge of the mouth of the labellum. The serrations are coarser and there are distinct veined markings on the veined helmet giving it a frilled appearance. Each has a single leaf green above and under, and both may be seen along Clark's Road, Hazelwood North, north of Church Road.

The Small Helmet or Pelicans (*C. unguiculatus*) has red underneath its leaf and its labellum protrudes beyond the dorsal sepal, rather than being under it as in the other two species. However, the specimens we have just found locally have other features which we find difficult to relate to *C. unguiculatus*. A sample has been forwarded to Melbourne for identification and in the meantime there is a certain amount of speculation and excitement.

This, of course, is one of the delights of orchiding; you never know what is around the corner. The excitement of finding something you haven't seen before is ample reward for the effort put into it. If one finds something new to the area it is even better and the possibilities of this happening in the Latrobe Valley is very real - where there is still much to be learned of the whereabouts of different species of flora.

J=P.

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This unused portion of Page 6 of the Newsletter could have been put to good use by short notes from members similar to those very interesting items supplied by Mrs. Lyndon. While the response to the request for contributions has been extremely gratifying, it could be increased by submissions by a greater number of members. Every member of the Club is invited, even urged, to write something of some of the many experiences that we all have, at some time or another with relevance to the field of natural history. Space will be found for anything of interest to members generally.

President:

Mr. K.G. Eldridge,
Lafayette Street,
TRARALGON.

Secretary:

Mr. S. Belgraver,
179 Lloyd Street,
MOE.

Hon. Editor;

G.T. Scanlan,
L.V.C. Hospital,
YALLOURN.

LATROBE VALLEY FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB.

OCTOBER 1964. ISSUE NO. 12.

MONTHLY

NEWSLETTER.

Dear Fellow Field Naturalists,

Members are asked to note the alteration in the date of the next Excursion from the 31st. October to Saturday the 7th. November.

In this issue there are two accounts of the very interesting Excursion to the Dutson Heathlands on the 26th. September, led by Mr. Bob Auchterlonie. No apology is made for some repetition in the description of observed flora, as it is felt that the two excellent articles complement each other. It has not been possible to check two or three differences in specific names quoted by the two members, for which there are probably good reasons.

EXCURSIONS - SATURDAY 7TH. and SUNDAY 15TH. NOVEMBER.

Saturday 7th. November.

This excursion has been postponed for one week from the listed date of 31st. October in the hope that Miss Jean Galbraith will be back from West Australia and will lead it. It will be along the Blackwarry scenic road via Gormandale, and wildflowers will be the main interest.

Times of Departure:

Moe Post Office.	9 a.m.
Yallourn Post Office.	9. 15 a.m.
Morwell Town Hall.	9. 30 a.m.
* Traralgon Methodist Church.	10 a.m.

* Please park in front of the church on the South side of the Princes Highway.

Sunday 15th. November.

On this date our Club is to be host to the Field Naturalist Club of Victoria. Our Melbourne visitors are expected to arrive at Moe between 11.30 a.m. and midday. They will be met by Mr. Belgraver and Mr. Homann who will escort them to Moondarra Dam, where we are to have lunch.

In the afternoon Mr. Eldridge will lead the excursion along the Tyers River gorge where Eucalypts, other flora, and the geology of the area will be studied.

Pick-up Times: 11.30 a.m. at Traralgon Methodist Church - South side of Highway.

11.30 a.m. at Morwell Town Hall.
Yallourn Post Office.
Moe Post Office.

Transport arrangements for members without cars should be made not later than 2 days before excursions with :

Traralgon:	Mr. K. Eldridge - Trar. 72503.
Morwell:	Mr. J. Peterson - Mor. 42129.
Yallourn:	Miss N. Rossiter - Yall. 52392.
Moe.	Mr. S. Belgraver - 179 Lloyd Street, Moe.
Tyers:	Mr. F. Jones.

N.T. Rossiter,
EXCURSION SECRETARY.

Hazelwood Arboretum - Working Bees.

Sunday 18th. October - 10 a.m. For whole day.
~~Saturday 31st. October - 10 a.m. For whole day.~~

Sunday 1 Nov

N.T. Rossiter.

NOTES FROM THE EXECUTIVE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 12TH.
OCTOBER 1964.

Professor Thomson, who was invited to give a lecture on Aborigines and aboriginal life at our October meeting, informed us that due to heavy commitments during this month, he was not able to accept our invitation, but he would be only too pleased to visit our Club at a later date. He will be invited to give his lecture early next year.

The General Meeting on Wednesday 28th. October will now be a Members' Night. Mr. Jernikov will be asked to give a talk on the Harbin Museum; Mr. Jones will show his slides on birds and give information about the first bird-banding camp to be held on 31st. October in Boola Boola Forest. In the business part of the Meeting members will have the opportunity to put forward suggestions for next years programme.

Mr. Jones reported that on Saturday 3rd. October, members of our Club took part in the planting of trees at the Sale Common, which help was much appreciated by Mr. Roberts, the Regional Officer of the Wild Life and Fisheries Department. On Friday 23rd. October at 11 a.m. the Sale Common will be officially declared a Nature Reserve and transferred to this Department. Members have been cordially invited to this ceremony.

Mr. Peterson reported that he officially represented the Club at a visit to the South Cascade Creek with members of the Council of the City of Moe, the Shires of Morwell and Trafalgar. It was decided to approach the Secretary of the Forestry Commission to get this area declared a Scenic Reserve.

A letter from the Good Neighbour Council asked the co-operation of our Club for a get-together of Old and New members of the community to be held on the 31st. January 1965 at the Main Oval in Morwell. Possibilities of a small exhibition that day will be discussed at the General Meeting, and volunteers asked for the organising.

Possibilities of preserving about 8 acres of land at Downey's Road near Koornalla will be investigated by Messrs. Homann and Peterson.

The next Meeting of the Executive will be held on Monday 9th. November at 7.30 p.m. at the home of Mr. E. Homann, 84 Hennessey Street, Moe.

S. Belgraver
SECRETARY.

LYREBIRDS. REPORT OF ADDRESS BY DR. L.H. SMITH 23RD. SEPTEMBER.
by Mrs. M. Galbraith.

For those who were not able to attend our Field Naturalist Meeting on September 23rd. the following notes on Dr. Smith's talk may be helpful.

Dr. Smith, President, National Parks Authority, visited our Club meeting last month and gave us a most interesting and informative talk, well illustrated by excellent slides and tape records. His subject was 'Lyrebirds of Sherbrooke Forest, and, as his study of them and their growth and habits extends over many years, he was able to give us a very complete story and series of pictures. We saw how the young lyrebird takes many seasons to acquire his wonderful tail complete with two outer lyrates, 12 filamentaries, and two primaries.

One of the remarkable things which Dr. Smith has proved by a series of close detailed photos, is the filmy filamentary feathers begin as ordinary feathers, complete with barbules to keep each tiny section of the feathers interlaced. As the young lyrebird (male) develops these feathers lose their barbules, grow spreading and more plume-like until finally in his eighth season the whole feather has changed down all its length to a perfect filamentary without falling out or moulting.

The two striped lyrates moult each season, and the new one is longer and the dark brown end more pronounced, but the filamentaries go through the whole process of change by the same feather growing and losing its barbules gradually. After eight years when the whole tail has finished growing, all the feathers moult every year, and a completely new set grows in a few weeks. The young male lyrebirds do not wait till this tail is fully grown before dancing and displaying. They begin quite young and will sing to a fern frond or anything about their height. Although the Lyrebird looks so proud and regal he is not at all aggressive, and each pair move into a territory of their own when ready to mate as if by some prearranged agreement. The tamest lyrebird in Sherbrooke, 'Spotty', died in March this year aged about 20 years. He has several sons now displaying and several other individuals have become well known to bird observers, but none is quite so tame as Spotty was. His pictures have been shown everywhere.

M.G.

EXCURSION TO DUTSON, 26TH. SEPTEMBER, led by and described by Mr. Bob Auchterlonie.

Favoured with a beautiful Spring day, about a dozen car loads of members and friends took part in this excursion. Our route lay along the Princes Highway with its scattered old Forest Red Gums (*Eucalyptus tereticornis*), and Black Wattle (*Acacia mollissima*), as far as Rosedale, where we switched across to the Longford road. Flocks of White Cockatoos were observed feeding in the adjoining paddocks, and Hedge Acacia (*A. armata*) made occasional splashes of gold.

Approaching Longford, the road passes for some miles through extensive plantations of *Pinus Radiata*, grown for pulpwood. We stopped to admire a fine specimen of Drooping Sheoke (*Casuarina stricta*). It was explained how nature, in order to reduce transpiration, and thus conserve moisture within the plant, had reduced the leaves to vestigial scales, and turned over their job of photosynthesis to the green twigs, thus enabling the tree the better to withstand the heat and drought of the more arid parts of Australia. The roadside turf here was dotted with Early Nancy (*Anguillaria dioica*), and we saw one plant of Snake Orchid (*Diuris pedunculata*) with its bright yellow flowers.

A few miles further on, a pause was made at a clump of the dwarf stringybarked form of Mahna Gum (*Eucalyptus viminalis*) which is sometimes found in sandy soils at low altitudes; and the contrast noted between this form and its taller smooth-barked brother. Also noted here were Silver Banksia (*B. marginata*), Saw Banksia (*B. serrata*), and Dwarf Rice Flower (*Pimelia humilis*).

From Longford, we took the Dutson road, and a few miles on turned up a side road to an area which had produced a spectacular display of wildflowers last year, but is not nearly so good this year. Pink Beard Heath (*Leucopogon ericoides*), White Beard Heath (*L. virgatus*), Sticky Boronia (*B. anemonifolia*), Wedding Bush (*Ricinocarpus pinifolia*), Spike Acacia (*A. oxycedrus*), and others.

A little further on, we drew into the grounds of the derelict Dutson Hall for lunch, which we had in the shade of a row of large pines of several kinds, and other conifers planted over 80 years ago. We were interested to see an equally old specimen of the evergreen Cork Oak (*Quercus suber*), a native of Spain.

Duly refreshed, we proceeded on our way to the Latrobe Valley Water and Sewerage Board's sewage disposal farm at Dutson Downs. Mr. W. Parsons, who is well versed in operations here, kindly undertook to escort us round. From an eminence just inside the entrance, he explained plans to plant the farm's roadways with trees and shrubs for beautification and wind break purposes, and we were gratified to learn that Australian natives were to be employed for the purpose, and that some hundreds of these are now being raised in the nursery preparatory to planting out.

Proceeding along a winding track flanked first by lush pastures, then extensive reservoirs of dark liquid from which the skeletons of drowned trees protruded, we were taken to a small enclosure

on the crown of a low rise. This area had been cultivated, laid down to pasture experiments, then abandoned and allowed to revert to native vegetation. It has developed into a veritable wild-flower garden, and evoked the admiration of all who saw it. It would be difficult to list all of the species present, but prominent ones were--

Neat upright plants of one of the Guinea Flowers, probably *Hibbertia fasciculata*, covered in bloom; a White Everlasting probably *Helichrysum baxteri*, also massed in bloom; several *Pultenia* and *Dilwynnia* species; *Daphne* Heath (*Brachyloma daphnoides*; Sticky *Boronia* (*B. anemonifolia*); Heath Pink-eyes (*Tetrathica ericifolia*; Red *Correa* (*C. reflexa*); occasional plants of Blue *Dampiera* (*D. stricta*); Running Postman (*Kennedyia prostrata*) and Sweet *Acacia* (*A. suaveolens*); while scattered through them were survivors of the pasture experiments, African Veldt-Grass (*Ehrharta longiflora*), Subterranean Clover and Lucerne.

Returning to the winding track, we soon found ourselves driving through a wide expanse of Dotted Heath-myrtle (*Thryptomene miqueliana*) in full bloom. Here also were Broad-leaved Peppermint (*E. dives*), Silky Tea-tree (*Leptospermum myrsenoides*), and a few plants of the moss-green Pine Heath (*Astroloma pinifolius*), and Blue *Dampiera*. After feasting our eyes on all this, we made a brief call at the nursery, where many native and introduced plants are thriving in the light sandy soil, fortified with fertilizer containing the trace elements copper and zinc. Of interest was a large bed containing some thousands of newly struck cuttings of a species of Poplar known as American Cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*), and selections and hybrids from that species. Under favourable conditions, this tree grows rapidly, producing a crop of timber within 15 or 20 years. Poplar wood may be described as a 'soft hardwood', and is extensively used overseas for the production of pulpwood, plywood, and matchsticks.

Returning to Longford, we turned down the South Gippsland Highway, passing near the tall barber's pole mast of 3GI, to pull in at the 139-mile post. Here Smooth Rice Flower (*Pimelia glauca*), and gorgeous Red *Correas* were blooming in abundance, also Love Creeper (*Bredemeyera volubilis*) with lilac-blue flowers, Smooth Flax Lily (*Dianella loevis*), Many-flowered Mat-rush (*Lomandra multiflora*), a rush that really belongs to the Lily family; and scattered Waxlip Orchids (*Glossidia major*), and Mayfly Orchids (*Acianthus caudatus*).

Continuing down the South Gippsland Highway as far as Stradbroke, we then took the Willung road, which traverses thick bushland and clean well-kept grazing properties in turn. On arrival at our last stopping place about midway between Stradbroke and Willung, the leaders realised that the rearguard was not following, and speculation was rife as to what had become of them. Could they have taken a wrong turning, or maybe, run into mechanical trouble? Our misgivings were soon dispelled however, for after about ten minutes or so, the missing ones turned up, in high spirits, having dallied awhile by the wayside to pass the time of day with an emu, which the leaders had passed by without so much as a glance.

After admiring a section of roadside resplendent in the purple and gold of Purple Coral Pea (*Hardenbergia monophylla*), and Spreading *Acacia* (*A. diffusa*), the leaders were thanked for a most enjoyable day, and we wended our way homewards via Willung and Gormandale.

----- R.N.A. -----

THE SAME EXCURSION THROUGH OTHER EYES.- by Miss Betty Kemp.

Fine weather, a warm sun and a cool wind, made this our first wild flower excursion doubly enjoyable, and we were also joined by members of Morwell Horticultural Society for the day.

Our first stop was out of Rosedale on the Longford Rd. to study a Sheoke (*Casuarina suberosa*) with its tiny, scale-like yellow leaves along the many needle-like branchlets, and to learn the habits of the species. Nearby was found an excellent specimen of Golden Moth Orchid (*Diuris pedunculata*), and Manna Gum (*E. viminalis*), and Saw Banksia (*Banksia serrata*), were also seen.

Entering Dutson Heath we ran into a profusion of Beard-ed Heath (*Leucopogon virgatus* - white, and *Leucopogon ericoides* - pink), Wedding Bush (*Ricinocarpus pinifolius*) with its creamy waxlike flowers, the 'Egg and Bacon' Showy Parrot-pea (*Dillwynia floribunda*), and the Sticky Boronia (*B. anemifolia*). Spike Wattle (*A. oxycedrus*) and Banksia serrata were well in evidence, and the stark white flowers of the Tea-trees stood out against the surrounding bush.

For lunch we stopped at the derelict Dutson Hall, about 80 years old, sheltered by some old imported trees, among them an American Redgum, a Portugese Cork Oak, and Cedar Atlanticus.

Our next port of call was on an eminence on Dutson Downs Sewerage Farm, a treeless windswept area of low heathland growth. Here were found Guinea Flower (*Hibbertia*), Daphne Heath (*Brachyloma daphnoides*), clumps of White Satin Everlastings (*Helichrysium leucopsidium*), Running Postman (*Kennedya prostrata*), Dwarf Rice Flower (*Pimelea humilis*), and Stunted Casuarina. An exciting discovery was a nest of the White Fronted Chat with three eggs, pink with white spots, in a low prickly shrub.

Back into the bush again, we came upon an area of Thryptomene or Bushy Heath Myrtle (*Thryptomene calycina*) with its graceful many-flowered branches. The tiny flowers with their lemon or red shiny centres did indeed resemble their children's nickname of 'Lemon and Jam Tarts'. Here also we found the little Blue Dampiera and Pink Eye (*Tetratheca ciliata*). The area contained many Grass Trees (*Xanthorrhoea australia*), the 'black boys' of Western Australia.

We called next at the Dutson Downs Plant Nursery which will supply trees and plants for the beautification of Dutson Heath, which takes and is partly drowned by the effluent from Maryvale Timber Mill, and local sewerage areas. Another stop, this time homeward on the South Gippsland Highway, produced more Wedding Bush and Rice Flowers, also the pretty blue Love Creeper (*Bredemeyera volubilis*), mauve Waxlip Orchids (*Glossodia major*), and the red-belled 'Wild Fuchsia' (*Correa reflexa*).

On the road to Willung, through smooth green sheep country, we were amazed to see a large emu strolling about among the sheep. Further along we came upon a quite thick patch of the large-leaved violet-blue 'Sarsaparilla' creeper (*Hardenbergia violacea*) and more mauve Waxlips.

A final discovery by a few keen stragglers on the Willung to Gormandale Road was a number of patches of Blunt Greenhood Orchids (*Pterostylus curta*), and Nodding Greenhoods (*Pterostylus nutans*), large mauve Waxlips galore, Hardenbergia, Blue Star Lily, Spider Orchids (*Caladenia patersonii*) in bud, and finished Helmet Orchids (*Corybas diemenica*). This put the finishing touches to a very satisfying and enjoyable day, whetting our appetites for more wildflower excursions.

Our thanks go to Mr. Auchterlonie and Mr. Parsons for their organisation and interesting leadership of such a wonderful excursion - and to Mother Nature for her co-operation with the weather.

--- B. Kemp ---

BIRD-BANDING.

Camp-out with the Victorian Ornithological Research Group. by Mr. Frank Jones.

From October 31st to November 3rd. the Victorian Ornithological Research Group will be conducting their bird-banding camp-out at Stony Creek, via Cowarr Weir. Plans for this outing have been finalized, and it is intended to be a combined camp-out with V.O.R.G. people and members of the Latrobe Valley Field Naturalists Club all participating.

Those members of our Club who are interested in bird life and would like to camp at Stony Creek, or visit with the bird-banding camp at any time during the four days of our stay, can find the spot by going first to the Cowarr Weir, and then crossing the outlet

and also the Thomson River on the down-stream side of the Weir, and following the road into the hills a bit, and taking the road to the right at the first junction. This road takes you down to Stony Creek, and the camp will be seen near the bridge.

The object of this outing has, I think, been made clear in previous items in this news-letter, and it will certainly provide members of our Club with an opportunity to see how bird-banding is done, as well as being a practical banding week-end for the V.O.R.G..

The camp-site is on private property, but permission has very kindly been given for us to use the site for the duration of our stay. Good drinking water is available from the creek, and fire-wood will be provided. Being situated on the creek where the timbered foothills meet the more open river-flat country, the location makes an ideal camping and picnic spot, but owing to the need for undisturbed, natural conditions where bird-banding is being carried out, I suggest that the occasion should not be regarded as an opportunity for a big picnic party.

The bird-life of the area seems to be reasonably varied and abundant. On visits to the area in connection with the forthcoming camp-out I have listed 45 species, but the full bird-list for the place is probably about twice that number. This particular spot was chosen mainly for its accessibility and the unspoilt nature of the surrounding bush-land.

Those who cannot attend our next General Meeting on October 28th. and require further information on this matter can contact me by mail care Tyers Post Office, via Traralgon.

----- Frank Jones -----

MORE RANDOM NOTES. by Mrs. Ellen Lyndon.

SOME ODD NESTING SITES.

Our friends and neighbours the garden birds have chosen some odd places to build their nests, over the years. One season the Willy-wagtails intrigued us by attaching the nest very neatly to the carrier of a man's bicycle hanging in a shed. When that nest was full to overcrowding with three hefty young it was a most amusing sight.

In our garage, on the driver's side as the car runs in, there hangs on the wall just at eye level, an upright metal plate drainer retired from the kitchen. We brush right past it every time we enter the car. Inside the rack someone has thrust my husband's old military peaked cap, and it leans against the back of the rack on its edge. All of a sudden yesterday we became aware that a thicket of dried moss, ferns and dry grasses had appeared in the crown of the cap; quite a large square block of these materials was wedged against the front bars of the drainer. From a neat feathered side entrance there peeped the sharp bill, the beady eyes under white stripes of a White-browed Scrub-wren.

Somehow that nest just grew. We hadn't noticed it building. But it is quite the nicest surprise we have had this dismal winter. Nice too, to see it so snugly placed while the rain drizzles so miserably outdoors.

One disturbing thought, the Scrub-wrens evidently expect it to be a wet Spring !

----- E.L. -----

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179 Lloyd Street,
MOE.

Editor:

G.T. Scanlan,
L.V.C. Hospital,
YALLOURN.

LATROBE VALLEY FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB.

NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER.

ISSUE NO. 13.

Dear Fellow Field Naturalists,

Reference is made in the report of the last Executive Meeting to the Working Bee at the Hazelwood Arboretum on Sunday the 22nd. November starting at 10 a.m.... Members are urged to go along if at all possible, and make this a day of special effort. It is of utmost importance that as much as possible be done on that day.

Art Award: Members will, I am sure, join in congratulating Mrs. C. Jacobson on winning the A.L.V.A. Art Competition with a landscape in oils.

EXCURSION SATURDAY NOVEMBER 28TH. by Miss N. Rossiter.

Our excursion this month will be an entomological expedition led by Dr. J. Moore Andrew, to Glenaladale National Park. It is hoped that in the Burgan Scrub in the vicinity of the car-paddock there will be a great variety of insects at this time of the year.

This should be a fascinating excursion with plenty of specimens for enthusiastic collectors.

Picking-up Times:-

Moe Post Office.	8 a.m.
Yallourn Post Office.	8.15 a.m.
Morwell Town Hall.	8.30 a.m.
Traralgon Methodist Church.	9.00 a.m.
(South of Highway)	

All cars to meet at Providence Ponds on the Princes Highway at 10.30 a.m. Those needing transport contact any of the following by Thursday November 26th.

Mr. K. Eldridge.	Traralgon 72503.
Mr. J. Peterson.	Morwell 42129.
Miss N. Rossiter.	Yallourn 52392.
Mr. S. Belgraver.	179 Lloyd Street, Moe.
Mr. F. Jones.	Tyers.

N.R.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEETING HELD 9TH. NOVEMBER.

The letter from the F.N.C.V. regarding the Car Stickers, in which it was advised that the Council had decided not to support our proposal, was discussed and the Sub-Committee will draft a letter of reply.

A few matters of preservation of flora in our district were discussed. Following a report on Oversay's Block near Koornalla the appropriate authorities will be approached. Also, regarding protecting the flora along the roads in Hazelwood North will be discussed with the authorities concerned. On Mr. Brady's request, a Sub-Committee will investigate possibilities of preserving flora on his property.

Miss Jean Galbraith advised the Meeting that in due course the proposed reserve in the Boola Boola Forest will be surveyed by the Lands Department.

Miss Rossiter reported that working bees had been held at the Hazelwood Arboretum on Saturday October 31st. and Sunday November 1st., when about 150 trees were planted in the six blocks adjoining the highway, these being the only blocks considered dry enough for planting. Deviations from the original plan were necessary as all the species of trees ordered had not been supplied, and other species had been substituted to make up the total numbers. The grouping according to size of trees in the original plan was adhered to where possible.

Another working bee is to be held on Sunday 22nd. November, starting at 10 a.m., when it is expected that the lower area near the dam will be dry enough for working.

In addition to the arrangement for the combined excur-

sion with the Field Naturalists' Club of Victoria on Sunday 15th. November, members are advised that the party will leave the Moondarra area at about 1 p.m..

Finally, preliminary discussions were held regarding the 1965 programme, which will be finalised at the next Executive Meeting, which will be held on December 14th., at Mr. Jones' place.

S. Belgraver, Secretary.

UNDESCRIBED ACACIA: Mr. Eldridge has advised that a reply has been received from the National Herbarium about the Acacia mentioned in the September Newsletter; this Acacia which we could not identify was found growing at the Narrows and at Ezards No. 1, as well as at several intermediate points along the road. The letter is as follows;

'The specimen which you sent in for identification on the 14th. Sept. is an Acacia species which has been known in Victoria as A. falci-formis. However, it differs in certain characteristics from A. falci-formis, which is found only in N.S.W. It is probably undescribed, so for the time being we cannot give it a name'.

EXCURSION TO LABERTOUCHE WITH WARRAGUL F.N. CLUB ON 7TH. NOVEMBER 1964. by Miss B. Kemp.

This excursion, at the invitation of Warragul F.N. Club, replaced the one arranged to the Blackwarry Scenic Road, as it was felt to be a golden opportunity, not to be missed, of visiting the several Nature Reserves at Labertouche, organised by the Warragul Club.

As the excursion was an afternoon one, we decided to spend the morning exploring along the Old Sale Road en route, starting from Moore Street, Moe, and Old Sale Road junction, and led by Mr. E. Homann. Again Mother Nature co-operated, for it rained only while we travelled and otherwise remained fine.

Our first stop, about six miles out of Moe, produced quite a variety of wild flowers. There were good specimens of the Common Spider Orchid (Caladenia Patersonii); mauve Chocolate Lily (Dichopogon strictus); Sickle Greenhood Orchid (Pterostylis falcata); Green Fringed Spider Orchid (C. dilatata), and a particularly good one of the Scented Leek Orchid (Prasophyllum odoratum). Also found were the Common Apple-berry (Billardiera scandens), its greeny-white bells very like the Correa but waisted; one of the Sun Orchids, and Golden Everlastings. The yellow flowers of the small Trailing Goodenia (Goodenia lanata), and the larger shrubbier Hop Goodenia (Goodenia ovata), the white of the Tea Tree, and pink of the Dogwood (Cassinia aculeata), added their colour.

Continuing our journey, many Milk Maids (Burchardia umbellata) lined the route, and specimens of Snow Daisy Bush (Olearia lirata), stood out with their white daisy clusters.

Still on the Old Sale Road, our next stop was near the junction of the Trafalgar-Willow Grove Road, to examine a bed of Sphagnum Moss under Melaleucas in a hollow by the road. Across the road was a fine stand of flowering Scented Paperbark (Melaleuca squarrosa) with their creamy-yellow catkins; and specimens of Silver Banksia (Banksia marginata) with their leaves cut square across the tips. There were also the yellow-red Heathy Parrot Pea (Dillwynia glaberrima), and Golden Guinea Flower (Hibbertia stricta); the pretty blue Tufted Lily (Stypendra caespitosa) with its bright yellow stamens; and Dotted Sun Orchids (Thelymitra ixiodes) with their delicate colouring of pink outside, and blue inside.

Passing through Shady Creek and Buln Buln, still between rows of Milk Maids, we noted more Pink Dogwood, plenty of golden Hop Bitter Pea (Daviesia latifolia), and the lovely red and pink of young eucalypts. Continuing on to the Warragul-Neerim South Road through open green farmlands, it was rather strange to see the un-Australian tall pink and white May hedges which must have been imported nostalgically by earlier migrants.

Finding Glen Cromie Park closed, we entered the Princes Highway at Robin Hood, west of Drouin, and had lunch at Picnic Point to the music of bellbirds, with a wary eye cocked at a swarm of bees hanging from a bough high overhead on a tall eucalypt. Here we met mem-

bers of Frankston F.N. Club out on the same excursion, and there was a great re-union of those of both Clubs who had attended the last C.A.E. School at Mt. Beauty.

After lunch we linked up with the Warragul Club at the Labertouche turn-off, and a fine convoy of 22 cars set off along the Labertouche Road to visit three Reserves. Patches of the pretty blue Dampiera stricta were seen along the roadside, and here also the creamy catkins of the Melaleucas were mixed with the pure white flowers of the Teatree.

About five miles further on we stopped at an area of semi-cleared land that filled us with delight. Among the bracken and young eucalypts growing up again was a profusion of pink and white Boronia (Boronia muelleri) with its aromatic foliage reminiscent (to the writer) of the aniseed plant or fennel; blue Dampiera, Pink Eye (Tetratheca ciliata), and pink Native Rose (Bauera rubioides), often growing together and making a very pretty picture; white Teatree; Golden Bush Pea (Pultenaea gunnii); yellow Goodenias (Trailing -lanata, and Hop-ovata), related to the Dampiera; yellow Spoke Wattle (Acacia oxycedrus); Spreading Wattle (A. diffusa); yellow-red Handsome Flat Pea (Platylobium formosum); Common Appleberry and the pretty but spiky foliage of the Silky Hakea (Hakea tenuifolia). As the land was to be cleared again, many fine specimens were eagerly gathered. Further back in the bush under the trees, specimens of a white Orchid (Caladenia alba) and Pink Fingers (Caladenia carnea) were found, and a young specimen of one of the Beard Orchids. A Wood Brown Butterfly, with its lovely velvety nigger-brown and gold markings, was captured, examined and released, and what appeared to be a Swallowtail Caterpillar was also found. Not so pleasant, a 3 feet Black Snake was killed across the road.

Reluctantly we left this area and started climbing into the mountain area, the road still lined with many of the flowers we had just seen. We passed through a Boronia Reserve with masses of tall and pink and white Boronia bushes in the gullies and on the mountain slopes. Here also in tall growth was a profusion of Golden Tips (Goodia latifolia) and Handsome Flat Pea, as well as Tree Ferns, Silky Hakea and Pink Eye, with here and there the stark white flowers of a Snowy Daisy Bush.

Our next stop was in a Grevillea Reserve containing the handsome Grevillea Barkleyana with its pink flowers, the only specimens to be found in Victoria. Here were banks of Handsome Flat Pea, Prickly Bush Pea (Pultenaea juniperina), Dusty Miller (Spyridium parvifolium), Coral Fern (one of the Gleichenia) and Fan Fern (One of the Sticherus). Also seen were the Pink Bell (Tetratheca stenocarpa), somewhat similar to the Pink Eye but taller and with bristly flower stems, and the Rough Daisy Bush (Learia asterotricha), very like the Snow Daisy Bush of the lower levels, but with rough leaves and the daisy flowers growing up the stem instead of bunched at the end of the stem.

Continuing up the mountain we noticed more pink and white Boronia, very tall Prickly Bush Pea, and the pretty pink Native Rose growing in profusion, taller and more erect here. At the turntable we noted more pink Dogwood, the Musk Daisy Bush (Olearia argophylla), and found a specimen of the Hairy Fan Flower (Scaevola aemula) with five bright purple petals, yellow based, spread fanlike on a flat green leaf at intervals up the hairy stem. Returning down the mountain, we noted many Banksias (notably Silver Banksia - B. marginata).

A short pause at a third (Orchid) Reserve, opposite an old sand quarry, produced Pink Fingers of a very deep pink, and more Handsome Flat Pea.

Turning off the Labertouche Mountain Road into McDonald Road, we found many Common Bird Orchids (Chiloglottis gunnii) and finished Mosquito or Gnat Orchids, a Sickle Greenhood and a Brown Beard Orchid (Calochilus Robertsonii). Here also were specimens of Dwarf Rice Flower (Pimelea humilis), and the seemingly ubiquitous Handsome Flat Pea.

Having said thanks for the wonderful and interesting excursion, and farewell to our hosts, we returned to the Princes Highway at Robin Hood, and wended our way home, very glad of this opportunity to meet and share experiences with fellow 'Nats' from Warragul and Frankston.

B. Kemp.

REPORT ON THE BIRD-BANDING WEEK END AT STONY CREEK by
Mr. Frank Jones.

Campers and visitors at the combined V.O.R.G. and L. V.F.N. bird-banding camp at Stony Creek will, I think, agree that the occasion was one of great interest and considerable enjoyment. The beauty of this area and the variety of animal and plant life kept every one enthralled with the wonders of nature and the pleasures of the wild Australian bush. Bird-banding is such an absorbing interest, that it is a mystery that anyone should want to do anything else, but the Stony Creek area provided scope for other pleasures such as Orchid hunting and bush walking along the creek bed and adjacent ridges, and some of the party showed a keen interest in the mammals of the surrounding country, which is believed to be the home of among others the Native Cat, Phascogale, Marsupial Mouse, Allied Rat, and at least three species of Glider Possum.

The main activity of the week end, the mist-netting and banding of birds, was carried out with enthusiasm and a reasonable amount of success was achieved. A total of about 150 birds of 20 species was banded. While this is not good considering the number of nets used, and the time spent in obtaining these results, it did serve as a thorough introduction to the technique of bird-banding, and provides a number of banded birds for future observation and retrapping when our own bird-banding group becomes operative. The species banded were the Azure Kingfisher, Rufous Fantail, Grey Fantail, Grey Thrush, Jacky Winter, Yellow Robin, White-browed Scrub-wren, Blue-Wren, Striated Thorn-bill, Brown Thorn-bill, Little Thorn-bill, Rufous Whistler, Golden Whistler, Yellow-faced Honeyeater, Spine-billed Honeyeater, White-eared Honeyeater, Yellow-winged Honeyeater, Silver Eye, Red-browed Finch, and White-throated Tree Creeper.

For the keen bird observer, one advantage of bird-banding is that a close examination of birds held in the hand reveals fine details of colour and form and identification points that are indistinguishable in the field. When the method of bird-banding has been mastered there is time to appreciate the full beauty of the birds without any undue delay in releasing them. There are moments of beauty also during bird-banding operations, such as when an Azure Kingfisher (*Alcyon azurea*) being held by one of the banders spread its splendid wings in the desire to be free, causing one of the onlookers to exclaim "What a magnificent creature!". As this bird is almost entirely dependent on water life for food, and is seldom found away from the river margins, it was expected upon release to fly straight to the creek, but apparently confused by its experience it flew strongly for the hills, then realising its mistake, turned and with iridescent blue wings flashing in the sunlight flew past the group of watchers on the way to its favourite haunt.

Among the birds banded were three beautiful Rufous Fantails (*Rhipidura rufifrons*). These birds are similar to the common Grey Fantail (*R. flabillifera*) but somewhat larger, and have a rich russet brown about the head, back and tail, and striking dark markings about the breast. As Rufous Fantails have a north-south migrational movement, extension banding of these birds should provide interesting information. Much study remains to be done on the movements and distribution of birds, and as all such information is vital to the survival of our birds, the data obtained by bird-banders should be most useful.

The position now is that to follow up the idea of forming a bird-banding group, one or more members of our Club will have to obtain the necessary licences from the C.S.I.R.O. and the Fisheries and Wildlife Department, whereupon arrangements to do some banding of our own can be made. Certain precautions are taken by the authorities before licences are issued, and I am myself involved in the rather protracted procedure of obtaining my licences, but in the meantime a more detailed study of bird life will be most interesting and enjoyable.

Frank Jones.

EXCURSION TO McDONALD'S TRACK - 10TH. OCTOBER led and described by Mr. Bob Auchterlonie.

McDonald's Track has an intimate association with the early settlement of Gippsland, having been surveyed and cut in the years 1860-1862, by Mr. G.T. McDonald, whose name it bears. Commencing at Tobin Yallock (the present day Lang Lang), it ran in a generally easterly direction by way of Nyora, Poowong, Sea View, Alamboc, Childers, Thorpdale South and Narracan East, to junction with the then Sale-Melbourne track at Horwell Bridge. Three chains wide, and running along the tops of hills, it was originally intended as an alternate stock route for drovers bringing fat cattle from the stations in North and East Gippsland to Melbourne. As the greater portion of the route lay through dense forest never previously penetrated by white man, the magnitude of McDonald's task can well be imagined.

At Thorpdale South, the track passed through what was then one of the most magnificent hardwood forests in Australia, if not in the world. Giant Mountain Ash trees grew thickly, many to heights over 300 feet. The tallest was the Cornthwaite tree, which measured when felled 375 feet. It is recorded that as many as 10,000 six ft. palings were split from a single tree. Today, no trace of this forest remains, and in its place are lush green pastures and potato fields.

McDonald's Track was soon abandoned as a stock route, but it did prove very useful as a means of entry for the settlers when the land was thrown open for selection in the 1870's. Hundreds of land-seekers, of whom the writer's father was one of the first (in 1873), moved in along McDonald's Track to select the thousands of acres of rich but heavily-timbered land in the Narracan, Childers, Thorpdale areas and beyond; and set about the gigantic task of converting it into the productive farms we see today.

A section of this historic route in the Narracan East area provided the venue for our half-day excursion on the 10th. October. At a point known as the Cross Roads, five species of Eucalypt were noted, Silvertop (*E. Seiberi*) predominating, many of the trees flowering most profusely; Messmate (*E. obliqua*) with its usual associate Peppermint (*E. radiata*); Mountain Grey Gum (*E. cypellocarpa*), and the less common Brown Stringybark (*E. baxteri*). Ground cover is mainly Hop Bitter Poa (*Daviesia latifolia*), not yet in flower, and Long-leaf Acacia (*A. macronata*), with occasional patches of Hop Goodenia (*G. ovata*), and odd plants of Love Creeper (*Bredemeyera volubilis*), and Twining Glycine (*G. clandestina*), while one Sun Orchid (*Thelymitra* sp.) proved its hardiness by growing in the centre of a hard-beaten track.

A couple of miles further on, Austral Indigo (*Indigofera australis*) in full bloom was greatly admired, also Golden Tips (*Goodia lotifolia*), Cherry Bullart (*Exocarpus cupressiformis*) bearing immature 'fruit', Hop Acacia (*A. stricta*), and Varnish Acacia (*A. verniciflua*) had finished flowering, as had Prickly Bush Poa (*Pultenaea juniperina*). The twin leaves of Bird Orchids (*Chiloglottis gunnii*) were plentiful, but only a few plants were in flower, also scattered Alpine Greenhoods (*Pterostylis alpina*).

Another mile brought a change from grey to chocolate soil, with a marked change in the flora. Tall, clean-barked Manna Gums (*E. viminalis*), Mountain Grey Gums, and Blackwood (*A. melanoxylon*), Hazel (*Pomadouris apetala*), Musk (*Pleocarya argophylla*), Christmas Bush (*Prostanthera lasiantha*), Shiny Cassinia (*C. longifolia*), Elderberry Panax (*Pieghomopanax sambucifolius*). Tough Rice Flower (*Pimelia axiflora*) etc., while dominating the scene wherever one looked, were the two climbers Erect Clematis (*C. glyconoides*), and Wonga Vine (*Pandorea pandorana*). Trailing on the ground, scrambling over shrubs, and garlanded in the trees, these two produced a fairyland effect with their lavish tresses of bloom.

With the afternoon drawing on, we had just time for a brief inspection of the adjacent garden at 'Glenaveril', the home of Miss Grace Auchterlonie and the writer. A large number of Australian shrubs and plants are growing here, too numerous to mention, but outstanding were several fine specimens of the N.S.W. Waratah, making a

bold splash of colour, Kunzia baxteri, Otway Daisy Bush in both mauve and pink forms, and many others.

Two 'exhibits' shown added a touch of variety during the afternoon. First, a paling split at Thorpdale over 70 years ago demonstrated the remarkably straight-grained and free-splitting nature of the timber. Split 'on the quarter', i.e., at right angles to the bark, this paling was 8 inches broad, and 6 feet long, yet at no point did it exceed 8" in thickness, with a clean, smooth surface free from splinters. Second, was a pair of outsize gum leaves measuring 23 inches long, the intermediate leaves from a Mountain Grey Gum.

A cordial vote of thanks to the leader extended by Mr. G. Scanlan, supported by Mr. J. Peterson, brought a very pleasant afternoon to a close.

-Robt. N. Auchterlonie-

'MORE ON ORCHIDS' by Mr. Jim Peterson.

Some interesting local Orchid discoveries have been made during the last month. Whilst Mr. Homan and I were inspecting an area of land at Koornalla (brought to our notice By Mr. & Mrs. Thompson of Koornalla), we were shown the White Caladenia (*C. alba*), one of our uncommon orchids. Later Mrs. Thompson showed us another orchid on some land which is being cleared. This was identified as the orange tipped Caladenia (*C. aurantiaca*) another not so common orchid. We are very pleased to hear that these people will try to transplant some of these orchids to an area which will remain uncleared.

The following week end was the bird-banding camp out at Cowarr. During a lull and giving in to an urge to stray, I visited a spot where Frank Jones had seen some orchids growing. Again I came across the white Caladenia, which indicates that this orchid could be more widespread than was generally thought. One flower had a most conspicuous red labellum, unusual for this orchid, but making it one of our most attractive local orchids. Lady Luck smiled that day because a little later, among some Brownbeards (*Calochilus Robertsonii*) I found some 'beardless bearded' Orchids (*Calochilus imberbis*). This is classified as a rare orchid, and this spot is a completely new locality for it. The only present known spot for it is Rushworth, though it was found near Ringwood many years ago.

But this was not the end - Sunday the 8th. of November dawned to bring forward even better things. Whilst waiting for Mr. Muir, an enthusiastic orchid collector from the National Herbarium, Mr. Homan and I decided to look for an Onion Orchid known only from specimens collected at Loe in 1946. I think we would both confess that we were indulging in a little bit of wishful thinking, but this was to be Mr. Homan's hour. At the stage when I was ready to move off he spotted an Onion Orchid. This was duly identified as the rare Onion Orchid (*Microtis biloba*). Later in the day Mr. Muir found more of these flowering at Mirboo North. Mr. Muir has found an orchid of similar characteristics in the Dandenongs, so perhaps *Microtis biloba* is not as rare as was originally thought.

Later in the day another new locality was recorded for a variety of the Spotted Sun Orchid (*Thelymita ixoides* variety *truncata*). (The lobe (mid) of the column of this species is not crested as is the normal). Among the remainder of the twenty species we found that day was the Ruddy Hood (*Pterostylis pusilla*), a species of greenhood not recorded for this part of the Valley. I will conclude with this tantalising thought - 'What else is hidden in our Valley waiting for us to discover?'

-F. Peterson-

It is regretted that contributions from Mr. Triplett, Mrs. Lyndon and Mrs. Kinniburgh could not be included in this Newsletter. These will, however, form part of the December issue. (And Mr. Jernakov)

President:

Mr. K. Eldridge,
Lafayette Street,
TRARALGON.

Secretary:

Mr. S. Belgraver,
179 Lloyd Street,
MOE.

Editor:

Mr. G.T. Scanlan,
L.V.C. Hospital,
YALLOURN.

Dear Fellow Field Naturalists,

In preparing the final issue of the Newsletter for 1964, it is pleasing to look back upon a year of well-organised activity and accomplishment on the part of the Club. It is also gratifying to know that the Newsletter, providing in some measure a record of the Club's activities, as well as words of wisdom from the knowledge and experience of members, has been so well supported and apparently appreciated.

Members will regret news of an accident (in the interests of ornithology) to Mr. Frank Jones, but will be pleased to know that he is making a good recovery - now out of hospital. Rumpur has it that Frank was not a patient patient!

extracts

In this Newsletter are included from two letters addressed to the Editor and to members from Mrs. Florence Kinniburgh, while spending an extended and exciting holiday in Japan. As might be expected, Mrs. Kinniburgh got away from the beaten tourist track, and her comments reflect the universal love of nature and interest in natural history - perhaps more traditionally and deeply a part of Japanese life than that of many Australians.

Opportunity is taken to express on behalf of the President, Mr. Ken Eldridge and the Executive Committee good wishes for the Festive season to all members of the Club, and a happy and satisfying 1965.

A NOTE FROM THE EXCURSION SECRETARY-Miss N. Rossiter.
Excursion January 1965.

A week-end at Mount Baw Baw is being planned for January 23rd. and 24th. 1965. The Baw Baw ski-Club lodge is available for hire, the charge for the week-end being £1 for adults and 10/- for children.

The lodge has accommodation for 29. There is a main bedroom containing 16 - 18 bunks, and three smaller bedrooms. The bunks have inner spring mattresses, but members will have to supply their own pillows, sheets and blankets or sleeping bags. Crockery, cutlery and cooking utensils are available in the lodge. There are two stoves and one large griller. Hot showers will be available.

Bring your own food- the nearest store is at Tanjil Bren, 8 miles away. Journey time from Yallourn is from 2 - 3 hours. As it will be necessary to know the number of members who want to stay at the ski lodge, all those who wish to do so should book with the Excursion Secretary before December 25th. or after January 2nd. 1965, but not later than Tuesday January 12th.

- J.N. Rossiter. -

REPORT FROM THE SECRETARY OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
HELD 14TH. DECEMBER AT THE HOME OF MISS J. GALBRAITH.

Members will be pleased to know that our foundation President, Mr. Graham Marshall, has been promoted and will be teaching next year at the Kosciuszko State School in Traralgon.

A letter from the Secretary, Forestry Commission advised that consideration was being given to the creation of a Scenic Reserve at the South Cascade Creek. --- Appreciation was expressed by the Field Naturalist Club of Victoria on the organisation of the excursion to the Tyers River Gorge on Sunday 15th. November. --- The Shire of Morwell had advised the reservation of 50 acres in the vicinity of Sayers Trig Point as a Flora Reserve. ----- It was reported by Mr. Homann that a botanical survey had been made of the Edward Hunter Pool area in Moe, and that more than 60 flowering plants including eight species of orchids, and a number of ferns, had been identified. This will be advised to the City of Moe. ----- Regarding the Boola Reserve, Miss Jean Galbraith stated that 280 acres of this forest area had now been reserved, and the Club was to arrange for markers to be placed at suitable points for identification. ----- Miss Rossiter reported that about 500 trees had been planted at the Hazelwood Arboretum this year, and, on a recent inspection, appeared to be doing well. ----- Consideration was given to the programme for 1965, and the first six months will be advised to members at an early date.

-- S. Belgraver. --

REPORT OF A TALK BY MR. V. JERNAKOV AT THE OCTOBER MEETING.
'THE MUSEUM OF THE HEI LUNG CHIANG PROVINCE IN HARBIN, MANCHURIA!'

The Museum of the Hei Lung Chiang Province was founded in Harbin in November 1923 by a group of Russian naturalists who migrated to Manchuria from Russia after the revolution. First of all, this group established in September 1922 'The Manchuria Research Society', which was closed at the end of 1928 by the Chinese Government, and in 1929 the Museum was transferred to the Department of Education. At that time the Manchuria Research Society was reorganised as 'The Society of the Cultural Development of the Special Zone of Eastern Province'.

During the first six years of existence, the Museum collected about 50,000 specimens distributed in the following departments:- Geological, Botanical, Palaeontological, Zoological, Archeological, Ethnographical and Economical. The Manchuria Research Society organised a library, archives, and a department of local periodicals, a publication department, agricultural experimental station, botanical garden, and the Sungari River Biological Station.

During this period more than 200 works were published.

In January 1931 the Chinese Government, instead of the Society of the Cultural Development of the Special Zone of Eastern Province, established a Scientific Research Unit to which the Museum was then attached. During this period were organised: the first Scientific Expedition to Ching Poku Lake, the excavation of Post-tertiary mammals in Kiang-tien (a suburb of Harbin) which gave valuable material, and the Zoological Station where Spotted Deer, foxes, kolinsky and rabbits are bred. In January 1937 the Institute, together with the Museum, were transferred to the newly established Scientific Research Institute in Asinking (Chong Chun), which became its Harbin Branch, and the Museum continued its scientific work. In 1937 an expedition to the Wutalienchi Volcanic region was organised. Besides this expedition, the members of Harbin branch made some excursions to other places in North Manchuria. Many zoological, botanical, and archaeological material was collected during these trips. The scientific staff published their papers in the Bulletins and Reports of the Scientific Research Institute in English, German and Japanese.

In August 1945 the Russian Red Army entered Harbin and took the Museum. All Japanese employed there were dismissed. In April 1946, when the Red Army left Harbin, the Museum was transferred to the Harbin Polytechnical Institute as a Transport - Economic Permanent Exhibition. The Botanical Garden and Zoological Station, during the Red Army occupation, were destroyed. In 1951 the Railway Administration to which the Harbin Polytechnical Institute belongs, transferred the Museum to the Chinese Government, which changed its name again to 'The Scientific Museum of the Sunchiang Province. During this period (1946-1951) the Museum was closed to the public and the staff were employed only on scientific work, including several excursions. On 11th April 1951 the Museum was reopened to the public. During the last period the Museum several times changed its exhibitions, and Chinese collaborators were appointed.

The main purpose of the Museum of the Hei lung chiang Province (this was given in 1955 when Sung chiang Province was combined with Hei lung chiang Province and the first was abolished) was to show to the public Natural Resources, History and Economic construction of the Hei lung chiang Province.

The Museum now consists of three departments:- Natural Resources, History and Economic Construction. In Natural Resources were represented - Geology, Climate, Geography, Palaeontology, Mining, Water Resources, Wild Animals, Domestic animals, Fishery, Agriculture, Sericulture, Forestry, Medical Plants, Afforestation, Technical plants etc.. In the department of History - Palaeolithic and Neolithic cultures of the Province and specimens of various dynasties. In the same department paintings of old contemporary Chinese Artists were exhibited, including some in the medium of carving and embroidery. The department of Economics consists mostly of photographs, papers, maps and diagrams.

The most interesting specimens in the Museum included a complete skeleton of fossil Rhinoceros (*R. tichorhinus*) excavated in 1956 in the vicinity of the Fuliathzi Station of the Province; Biological

group of Manchurian Tigers, Elks, Otter, Kolinsky, Sable, Wolverine, Lynx with Hare. Among birds can be mentioned Eastern Black Grouse, Uergus squamatus, Mandarin Duck, and the Mountain Sparrow.

In the department of Natural Resources a big diorama presents a complete picture of the cedar forest of Wuying Station Region (Little Khingan). Besides exhibition halls there are laboratories- geobotanical, zoological, ethnological and photo. The Museum opens daily except Monday and Saturday mornings, and on all public holidays. For every department there are guides (girls) who explain the various displays to the visitors. On occasions the Museum makes special exhibitions, as in 1958 when the exhibition of Pleistocene Mammal of the Heilung Chiang Province was organised. The yearly attendance is about 300,000 people.

-- V. Jernakov --

A LIKELY STORY by Mrs. Ellen Lyndon.

Today I caught a Goshawk with my bare hands ! A good story? Ah, but the truth is I did not catch him. My fault, not his. He was intent on pursuing sparrows in the fowlyard hedges, blind and deaf to all but his immediate business. Distressful uproar amongst the bantams had brought me forth in time to see a familiar shape crasdiver into the bushes after a covey of frantic sparrows.

The hedge rocked and rolled and the only weapon in sight was a bushy limb of wattle. This, whipped along on top of the hedge, flushed the sparrows and confused the hawk, so that he slid down the wire-netting at the back almost to the ground. There he clung while I pinned him with my knee, his feet gripping the wire and head turned so that the bright eyes watched my every move. How exciting to catch and study him for a few hours! But how to avoid that ready beak and talons? We struggled - he to get free, and me to get my apron off with one hand in order to pop it over his head. In the end he won and dropped to the ground to squeeze under the fence and make good his escape. It was quite a while before he showed his face in our yard again.

One of our smaller and very useful hawks, the Goshawk (the name is probably shortened from Goosehawk) is a handsome fellow. Rich beige on back and wings with a bold barred breast of brown and pale fawn. He is one of the few members of his tribe not on the protected list, possibly because certain of his fellows become rogues and snatch chickens from the fowlyard. He lives on small birds, making annual visits to Mudlark and Wagtail territory and gobbling the fat young as they sit like ripe plums on a tree, just learning to fly. All the garden birds hate and fear him, and one is left in no doubt if a Goshawk is visiting. By his bad habits he has brought all honest and hardworking hawks, busily destroying rats and rabbits, into disrepute. Like the others, the Goshawk does valuable work in the same direction and can dispose of a full-grown rabbit with ease and dispatch. Once turned rogue and nuisance, however, the bird becomes a regular pest about the farmyard, growing more daring and persistent every day. Luckily there are few delinquents so the good points of the species far outweigh the bad.

-- Ellen Lyndon --

'THE TRIALS OF RAISING A FAMILY IN BIRD-OM by E. Triplett.

The year before last our black-bird had been sitting on eggs in the apple tree for a week, then the cat pulled down eggs and nest. Last year she had two tries, once in the same apple tree, and later in another tree. Each time a cat pulled the nest down after she had been sitting on the eggs. At present the bird is sitting on eggs in the open wood shed, and we wish her luck.

We also saw a Willie Wagtail build the second nest and have the second sitting of eggs last year. The first one was low down near a swing; the pine branch was neatly sawn off complete with nest and eggs, and taken away. Shortly after they rebuilt about eighteen feet up and raised a family.

-- E. Triplett --

JAPAN - IMPRESSIONS by Mrs. Florence Kinniburgh. 30/10/64.

'... now, after seeing a most wonderful Olympics, am touring the northern Island of Hokkaido, which consists of many high mountain ranges running centrally through the island..

When our 'plane from Tokyo set down at Chitose Airport located some 27 miles out of Sapporo, I was delighted to see everything covered with about seven inches of snow - just what I'd dreamed of seeing - it's wonderful and just like the Christmas card scenes.

At Sapporo amongst other things of interest, I visited the Botanical Gardens at Hokkaido University, where there many native trees, also medicinal plant gardens, a rock garden of alpine plants, and many glasshouses (they are called greenhouses here) containing ferns, catteleya orchids, begonias, geraniums, monstera deliciosa, and kindred indoor plants, cacti, cyclamens etc. - all of these cannot be grown outdoors because of the cold climate, and snowbound winter season.

Whilst there I met and spoke for over an hour to Dr. Takashi Tagawa who is a Professor of Plant Physiology of the Faculty of Agriculture of this University. Fortunately he speaks very good English, for my Japanese is just about hopeless. He gave me booklets of trees in the Arboretum etc., and a list of seeds for exchange, so I hope that maybe our Club can assist in this regard. I noted some young Eucalypts in one of the greenhouses, but variety unknown at this stage, however later when I meet the Director, Dr. Misao Tatewaki, I hope to get more definite information.

Now I am off the usual tourist track, high up in the mountains, light snow has been falling for the last two days, but it's not too cold and have been for many pleasant walks - good for one's health { On the way here from Asashikawa the lower hills were covered with golden 'karamatsu' (larch trees), also 'ezomatsu' (spruce indigenous to this Island, Ezo is the old name for Hokkaido, and Matsu - a pine).

Here at Sounkyo, noted for its hot sulphur springs, the perpendicular cliffs of sheer rock formation many hundreds of feet high, are covered with forests of silver and white firs, the native name is 'todomatsu'. This place would be a geologist's paradise, for there are many different types of rock - Troctorite, Mignamite, Norite, Olivine Gabbro, and Biotite Gneisses, noted at the Museum. Also were the semi-precious stones of Jasper and 'Meno' (a reddish-coral colour, or green).

Hokkaido butterflies and moths (mostly the Papilio variety are not magnificently coloured, mainly orange to brown. In this Museum are many wonderful specimens of insects, beetles, spiders, and several brown bears called 'higuma' which are of Siberian origin. Two varieties of native rabbit, one rather small the colour of our hare, and a larger animal, pure white called 'usagi'. 'Raicho' is the name for an unusual alpine ground bird, summer plumage mottled black and white, with orange markings round its head, but whose plumage in winter months turns to pure white - this bird is the ptarmigan, even very rare in these parts.

Deers, native of Japan (and mostly sacred), are called 'shika'. I have seen wonderful specimens complete with huge antlers, also many other animals and birds too numerous to mention.

22/11/64.

'I am now back on the mainland at the most northerly tip of Honshu, after a wonderfully scenic round tour of Hokkaido. Separating the two islands is a very deep channel called the Tsugaru Straits - the barrier line for flora and fauna which shows a considerable difference on either side. Thus the red Pine and black Pine (so typical of Japan); and the 'sugi' (Japanese Cedar), and 'hinoki' (Japanese Cypress), which are common on Honshu are unknown in Hokkaido, with the exception of some specimens of black Pine which have been transplanted at Hakodate only in recent times). Hokkaido has an abundance of Ezomatsu (Yesso Spruce), Todomatsu (Sakhalin Fir), 'Ichii' or 'Onko' (Japanese Yew trees), and a creeping Pine, but none of these are found on the mainland. Similarly the brown grizzly bear (Ursus arctos yesoensis), the 'shika' or Deer (Cervus nippon yesoensis), and numerous varieties of seals are inmates of the colder northern region only, believed once to have been connected to Siberia.

There are different types of bear and deer on Honshu, where monkeys and other smaller animals inhabit the warmer climate of the mainland.

While at Noboribetsu (Hokkaido) I went to a wonderful display of beautiful rocks and stones, annually organised by a collectors' Club - our geology members would have been most interested I'm sure. This Club is somewhat similar to our F.N's in that the members go into mountain areas, rivers, sea shores, fossicking for rocks and stones with good colour and quality, and unusual shape. To a certain extent they are polished in cleaning, and in some cases wooden bases are made into which these ornamental pieces are placed and used in decoration in the home.

Later an auction was held (with several rounds of sake) so interesting and entertaining that I forgot about lunch. (The Sake ? Ed.) As it was the first occasion an Aussie visitor had attended their display I was even allowed to bid, and so bought several small pieces, but not being in the position to charter a ship home I had to refrain from buying larger rocks and stones, though I would dearly love to own some Olivine gabbro.

Tancho Cranes: On a 70 acre reservation of swampy land in the vicinity of Kushiro near the eastern end of the southern coast of Hokkaido, live the Tancho Cranes (*Grus japonensis*). The similar (in appearance) Manchurian and Siberian Cranes are migratory birds, but these rather beautiful Tancho Cranes live permanently and breed only in this part of Japan, and are under strict Government control and protection for their scientific value. About 10 years ago only a small colony of 33 birds existed, but today there are over 150 in this only known breeding place in the world.

The young Cranes (quite tall) have white bodies, fine neck feathers and tail feathers of brown, bills about 6 inches long, and of course long brown legs. When four years old the small feathers on top of the head turn into an orange coloured wart-like crest. When adulthood is reached at five years this crest becomes red, and the tail and neck feathers change to black on the large handsome birds, which stand about four feet high. Early in June egg laying commences, usually two white eggs (about 3½" long) are laid in a large mound nest of reeds and grasses. Their food consists of small fish, shellfish, young leaves of orchids, 'susuki' (pampas grass), reeds and 'sori' (Japanese parsley). In deep winter season, when everything is snowbound, these Tancho Cranes often go to nearby farmhouses in search of food, and are fed corn, vegetables etc., by the kindly farming folk.

With kind regards to all F.N's. '

-- Florence Kinniburgh --

LECTURE WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 25TH. by Dr. J. Moore Andrew and
EXCURSION TO GLENALADALE NATIONAL PARK NOVEMBER 28TH.

It is regretted that a report is not to hand of the very valuable lecture on Insects by Dr. Andrew. However, a small but interested number of members followed his lead to the Glenaladale National Park on the Saturday, where the number of crawly things were apparently more numerous than it was anticipated. It is hoped that a report of the Meeting and also of the entomological side of the excursion will be available for the next issue of the Newsletter.

Many of those on the excursion took advantage of the track which has been cut by the energetic ranger at the Park, to travel to the two caves, including the Den of Nargun, with much less trouble and fatigue than was formerly the case. The track is wisely unobtrusive, and has not in any way spoilt the area - it has in fact made the spectacular gorge of Deadcock Creek more readily accessible to those interested in its many attractions. But many of us will hope that no more is done in the way of making it a 'Recreation Reserve' and the possible destruction of so much that is irreplaceable.

President.
Mr. K. Eldridge,
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TRARALGON.

Secretary.
Mr. S. Belgraver,
179 Lloyd Street,
MOE.

Editor,
G.T. Scanlan,
L.V.C. Hospital,
YALLOURN.

LATROBE VALLEY FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB.

FEBRUARY 1965.

Dear Fellow Field Naturalists,

Apart from the report by the Excursion Secretary, Miss Nancy Rossiter and the Secretary, Mr. Simon Belgraver, this Newsletter is monopolised by Mrs. Ellen Lyndon and Mr. Frank Jones. However, this a monopoly by two consistent, observant and articulate members which, I am sure, you will enjoy, particularly the 'epic' "Morwell Goes to the Mountain" by Mrs. Lyndon.

The Excursion Secretary, Miss Nancy Rossiter:

Members who were able to visit Mount Baw Baw on January 23rd. - 24th. found the mountain and alpine flowers so attractive that it has been decided to have the second excursion of the year to Mount Erica.

There will be a walk up the mountain of about three miles from where the cars are parked, and it is planned to lunch at the Mushroom Rocks about one third of the way up to the summit, so that lunches will have to be carried to this point.

Members are asked to keep together in one group as the track is not well defined. - - - All cars are to meet at Parkers Corner about three miles north of Erica on the Walhalla Road at 10 a.m..

Arrangements for those wanting transport should be made with any of the following several days before the excursion :-

Traralgon.	Mr. K. Eldridge.	Traralgon 72503.
Morwell.	Mr. J. Peterson.	Morwell 42129.
Yallourn.	Miss N. Rossiter.	Yallourn 52392.
Moe.	Mr. S. Belgraver.	179 Lloyd Street, Moe.

Picking-Up Times:-

Traralgon Methodist Church, Princes Highway.	9 a.m.
Morwell Town Hall.	9 a.m.
Yallourn Post Office.	9 a.m.
Moe Post Office.	9 a.m.
Tyers Post Office.	9.20 a.m.

- N.R. -

Executive Meeting Report by Mr. S. Belgraver:

The Executive Committee Meeting was held on the 8th. February 1965, and the following is a summary of the business of the Meeting:

Annual General Meeting: This will be held on Wednesday 24th. February at 7.30 p.m. at the Morwell High School. President Mr. K.G. Eldridge and Treasurer Mr. E. McElroy will give their annual reports, after which the biannual elections will be held for the Committee, nominations for all vacancies on the Committee being called for at the Meeting. Following the Meeting, the normal monthly meeting will be held, at which Mr. Frank Jones will show his beautiful bird slides.

Hazelwood Arboretum: The sub-committee of the Hazelwood Arboretum advised the Meeting that it will be necessary to hold regular working-bees at the Arboretum throughout 1965. It was decided to hold these on the second Saturday of the month, starting at 10 a.m., the first being on Saturday last the 13th. of February. The Committee hopes that both the Horticultural Society and our Club will be well represented at these working-bees, as there is a great deal of work to be done, such as an inventory of survivals, weeding, tying up etc..

Club Headquarters: Possibilities of establishing our own headquarters in the district were discussed.

Good Neighbour Exhibition: A report was made on the Club exhibition at the annual 'get together' of the Morwell Good Neighbour Council on Sunday 1st. February. Mr. Sterkenburg designed and made a most attractive setting for the material, which was collected by Mr. & Mrs. Jim Peterson. More than 100 leaflets, propogating the Club's activities, were distributed by the Treasurer, Mr. McElroy and myself.

-S.B.-

Report on the Week-End Trip to Mount Baw Baw - 23/1-65.by Mrs. Ellen Lyndon of Leongatha.

Club members who were fortunate enough to attend the recent week-end to Mt. Baw Baw were well rewarded for their long and steep journey to the Ski Village. The weather proved ideal and the Lodge surprisingly well equipped and comfortable. Ski Club representative Mr. Reg. Walley did everything possible to make the party's stay enjoyable, even to driving the fauna fans downstairs to the Ash forest on Saturday night.

It was a pleasure to meet members of Ringwood F.N.C., and to renew old friendships with the visitors from Bairnsdale. It was good to have Miss Galbraith back from her wanderings in the West. Those of us who are members of the Society for Growing Australian Plants were delighted to meet the President of that Society, Mr. F.J.C. Rogers.

The Village is set on a small plateau rather densely covered with Snow-gum (*E. niphophila*), enough of which has been cleared to give access and to provide ski runs etc.. Building in this village is proceeding apace. The characteristic granite boulders of the Baw Baws are piled or scattered through this woodland, and the hilltops are scarred with a strange and restless pattern of white windblown skeletons of fire-killed trees, mute reminders of the dreadful fires of '39. Some of these must have been ancient trees indeed, judging by the girths of some of the trunks. Regeneration must take hundreds of years to complete, for the new growth is a long way from hiding the remnants of the old.

Saturday afternoon's walk led up a shallow rising valley along a small fast creek that at times was lost in the Sphagnum beds. There were many interesting flowering shrubs and small herbs. The Mountain Richea, handsome in its spikes of white waxy flowers, prickled any bare legs among the walkers. *Epacris breviflora*, another heath, bore masses of the typical tubular white flowers of its kind. These are pleasantly scented. The Bush-peas were represented by *Pultenea muelleri*. The Mountain Pepper, which can be an attractive small tree in rich fern gullies, was here a small tough shrub. The very floriferous *Olearias* or Daisy-bush family was much in evidence, and the Alpine Mint-bush, *P. cuneata*, showed plenty of its mauve spotted flowers. An espalier-type rock and ground-cover plant was at first taken for the *Nertera*, but on further examination was proved to be a *Coprosma pumila*. Its taller relative was met with later, *C. hirtella*, the Rough *Coprosma*. Alpine *Orites* bore many spikes of creamy sweet-scented flowers, but the fine-foliaged yellow bottle-brush, *Callistemon sieberi* was only in bud.

Sprawling in the forks of old Snow-gum trunks the Baw Baw Berry was frequently seen, with its inconspicuous blossom. Like many of the Alpine shrubs it is notable for its berries in autumn. This plant is blessed (?) with a rather overpowering name, *Wittsteinia vacciniacea*. Another tough little mountain shrub abounds among the rocks. This is the Mountain Plum Pine, *Podocarpus alpina*. Slow growing this, but worthy of a place in an Australian garden for its fine foliage. It is sold by nurserymen with its somewhat larger relative *Podocarpus elata* from warmer parts of the continent.

Around and in the small sphagnum bogs there were drifts of mauve and white violets; a delightful little white Sundew, *Drosera arcturi*; a pale flowered Eyebright, *E. antarctica*; and a small white flowered Oxalis, *O. lactea*, trailing its shamrock leaves and dainty flowers into the creek pools. If this little gem will thrive in captivity as does its yellow relative of the plains, it will certainly be much sought after by collectors. The photographers made the most of their time amongst these dainty bog plants. The lily family has some Alpine members. *Dianella tasmanica* just ripening its blue bead berries; *Astelia alpina*, the Pineapple Grass, a patch plant of coarse silvery-hairy leaves; and *Herpilirion*, the tiny Sky Lily, its little stars almost embedded in the turf. *Caltha intraloba*, the Alpine Marsh Marigold, was seen as clumps of bright green leaves of decorative shape. It produces its huge white flowers as soon as the snow begins to melt. *Celmisia logifolia*, the Silver Daisy, was just coming into bloom. *Libertia pulchella*, the Morning Flag, lifted branching stems of small white flowers. So many of these Alpines seem to be white but there were two very colorful exceptions that

come to mind.

Splashes of rosy pink in the thickets marked the many floral clusters of the dwarf Rice flower, *Pimelia alpina*, a delightful plant. Trigger plants were plentiful on the highlands as they were on the plains. A form of rich rose color, this, sturdy in stem and flower. On the ridge near the top of the ski lift a dried-out rock pool was overrun with the creeping Fan-flower, *Scaevola hookeri*, literally covered with pale mauve fans. *Asperula gunni*, a small white Woodruff, grew thickly in dry places among the stones. From this ridge there were views over mountain tops and deep valleys clear to Aberfeldy, the old gold-mining site on the Walhalla-Woods Point Road, and closer still Mounts Whitelaw on the one hand and Erica on the other.

Walking in the opposite direction on Sunday morning, facing out over the cloud-covered Latrobe Valley, a small party of amateur botanists followed the walking track that leads down to the turntable and the gate. To make this track, up which the skiers must carry all their gear from the cars in the snow time, the soil has been thrown back to the sides. On this masses of the feathery blue flowered *Veronica nivea* has established itself. Small seedlings flourish in the pockets of wash dirt between the granite chunks on the badly eroded track itself. Patches of *Viola hederacea* with extraordinarily long stems forms floral carpets in the nooks between the fallen logs. Level lawns of green *Pennywort* grace the borders of a garden that is a delight all the steep way down.

Drawn by the sound of falling water to one side, the walkers discovered what had been a sheltered fern gully before the fires. Quite large logs had fallen in many places and spanned the creek and the fern clumps. Shield Fern, Hard Water-fern and one of the Fishbone types flourished there, with some of the small flowers mentioned previously. Myrtlebeech trees, copper-topped pyramids of ferny foliage, are beginning to reassert themselves, and the Eucalypt species from the lower forests are well on the way to replacing the overhead cover if they suffer no more burning. It was something of a shock on reaching the turntable to find the road banks staked down with seeding and planted with Cowgrass and other introduced grasses and clovers. Surely amongst our varied flora there must be something as good or better than these to combat erosion.

Of the ferns we saw the most plentiful was probably the Mother Shield Fern, *Polystichum proliferum*. In sheltered places toward the south the creek was lined with clumps of Fishbone Fern, *Blechnum nudum*. The fertile 'fishbone' that I discovered after some search was so unusual in structure that the possibility haunted me for some days after that the ferns might have been something much rarer. As it happens, they were not! (Better luck next time?) I met for the first time that dainty little Alpine Water-fern, *Blechnum penna-marina*, sheltering under the granite rocks in wet places. *Blechnum procerum*, the Hard Water-fern, grew also on the south side, and down near the gate was a single small plant of *Grammitis billardieri*, the Finger-fern. Doubtless there were other species to be found.

Shrubs noted by the Roadside as we came homeward. (We were too busy going up!)

All travellers must have remarked that perfectly symmetrical *Exocarpus cupressiformis*, the Wild Cherry, or Cherry Ballart. What a street tree it would make if one could guarantee the shape! Not that the ordinary form is not beautiful and willowy. There was Christmas Bush in plenty, and a *Persoonia*, a small tree with long leaves and perfectly round green fruit the size of marbles. Mountain Correa; Myrtlebeech; Austral Mulberry; Holly *Lomatia*; Elderberry *Panax*. An endless ribbon of greens and browns rolled by our windows. At a road cutting were a few specimens of the Fan Fern and a single plant of Coral Fern. Nearer to Tanjil Bren the road banks were curtained with *Platylobium formosum*, the Handsome Flat-pea. There were green groves of a *Phebalium*, probably *P. bilobum*. One would need to walk this inviting bush road, every step of it, to fully appreciate the beauties by the way that can only be guessed at from a car at even a moderate speed.

MORWELL GOES TO THE MOUNTAIN.

by Mrs. E. Lyndon.

The Club went to Baw Baw, the climb of the year
Our cars overheated and slipped out of gear
For every turn upward, the wheels spun round three
Oh! how good at the Ski Lodge that first cup of tea!

We were split into groups after one or two words
There was King on the fauna and Jones on the birds
While Rogers and Galbraith took care of the flowers
The whole party browsed for two three hours.

We walked where the Alpines bloomed sweet in the sun
We cooked and we dined, with much banter and fun
Their slides were so good of the birds and the flowers
We felt darn relieved that we hadn't brought ours.

In the dark of the night we piled into two cars
The road seemed less fierce 'neath the light of the stars
By the Fauna group's spotlight the Ringtails sipped blossom
But divil a sign of a Leadbeater's Possum.

More walking on Sunday through gardens so fair
The cuneate Mint-bush was scenting the air
We argued the species, for that's how you learn
Nomenclature of Daisies and Speedwell and Fern.

Rolling downhill and homeward with never a care
The smoke from our brakes filled the rarified air
We 'grazed' our way down, (how that made Betty laugh)
We swooped round the road bends well in our wrong half.

We paused to see Fan-ferns and Carla found Snakes!
While at every Persoonia Jill clapped on her brakes.
As to Bairnsdale and Ringwood departed our friends
We resolved to have more of these lovely weekends.

SOME VISITORS FROM THE NORTH, by Mr. Frank Jones.

Inexplicably, this year seems to be one in which migratory and nomadic birds have moved further south than is usual. Certainly the Gippsland weather this Summer would not be the attraction, but this season not only have we had more than our share of the usual Northern visitors such as the Black-faced Cuckoo-shrikes, Satin Flycatchers, Rufous Fantails, Pallid Cuckoos, Sacred Kingfishers, Rufous Whistlers, and a few others that are seen in the Latrobe Valley only in the Summer months, but we have been entertained by the brilliant Rainbow-bird (*Merops ornatus*), which has been found nesting in the banks of Rintouls Creek near Tyers, and we have had reports of a Scarlet Honeyeater (*Myzomela sanguinolenta*), from the same area, while the Tree Martins (*Myioboloides nigricans*) usually seen only occasionally, have been roving about in flocks. Much remains to be learnt of these lesser migrants that travel about within Australia with the change of the seasons, quite apart from the spectacular flights of the inter-continental migratory birds.

The seasonal redistribution of birds that affects the Gippsland region is mainly a southward movement of a number of species from their Winter habitat. With most species it is not a mass migration, but a dispersion of part of the bird population to the South with the effect that a species that in Winter is found only in Queensland and Northern New South Wales, may in Spring extend its range from the Northern cape to the Victorian littoral zone. What factors control the movements of these semi-migratory birds? Is the trustful little Rufous Fantail, who seems so much at home in our timbered gullies, just a casual wanderer who has met an equally vagrant mate in a suitable place and settled down to raise a family, or are they a pair mated for life, who have come annually along the

the same route to the same nesting place? The movements of birds seem to be controlled not only by survival influences, such as food supply and climatic conditions, but also something that seems to be in the nature of an aesthetic desire to return to a familiar place that has been a happy home in the past. This would explain what must be fascinating journeys by a varied company of birds travelling along remote mountain ranges and valleys, over open farmlands and plains, skirting cities and towns, each bound for their own chosen destination.

It is enlightening to watch a pair of Satin Flycatchers revelling in the freedom of their domain. They quiver ecstatically all the while, varying their strident call with a more musical whistle, and as their blue-black wings flash brilliantly in flight it is apparent that whatever the difference in reasoning power between birds and humans, the birds lack nothing in the perception and joyous appreciation of beauty, and would have instinct enough to return to a place of beauty and an environment suited to their well-being.

All this, however, sheds no light on the mystery of certain species being regular migrants, whereas closely related species are found in the same habitat all the year round. The Rufous Fantail (*Rhipidura rufifrons*) comes down each year from the North, but the Grey Fantail (*Rhipidura fuliginosa*) is with us throughout the year. Likewise with our other rufous friend the Rufous Whistler (*Pachycophala rufiventris*) which is found in Southern Victoria only in the warmer months, while the Golden Whistler (*P. pectoralis*) is a permanent resident.

With the real Summer with us at last and the late flowering Dogwood and Sweet Bursaria blooming along the creeks and hill-sides, and with the ripening of seeds and berries of many kinds, some of the insectivorous birds seem to have gone, their places taken by Silver-eyes, Red-browed Finches and Goldfinches. The remnants of the Bronze-wing Pigeon population feed on the fallen berries and seeds, and no doubt, but for the activities of illegal shooters, the voice of the Wongas would be heard throughout the hills.

Soon more of the birds will be leaving, and although Autumn and Winter have their own special interests for the bird observer it is reassuring to look forward to the time when we can go out and find that our Northern birds have, faithful to their native haunts, returned, unobtrusively.

— F.J. —

REPORT ON THE FORMATION OF A BIRD BANDING GROUP. by
Mr. F. Jones.

Since the idea was first suggested on the 27th. November 1963, the formation of a bird banding group within the Latrobe Valley Field Naturalists' Club has proved to be a slow process, but some progress has in fact been made. In August 1964 an invitation was received from the Victorian Ornithological Research Group to attend a bird banding camp in the You Yangs. Although only three members of our Club went to this camp, some insight into the methods of bird banders was gained, and tentative arrangements were made for a combined V.O.R.G. and L.V.F.N. camp at a later date.

This camp-out was duly held on the week-end of October 31st. to Nov. 2nd. 1964 at Stony Creek near Cowarr. During this week-end the V.O.R.G. banders gave a practical demonstration of what could be done in our own area, and much useful information on the banding of birds generally. With this knowledge and assistance we felt justified in applying for the necessary licences with a view to doing some banding of our own.

After long negotiation licences have been obtained from the appropriate departments, and three mist nets have been bought, and as all the other equipment has been supplied by the C.S.I.R.O., we are now in a position to do some practical bird banding. However, as we have yet to receive a permit to use the mist nets we are at present unable to use this method, but as soon as this final requirement has been fulfilled, we will be able to arrange for our first mist netting effort early in March.

— E.J. —

SOME FURTHER THOUGHTS ON THE BAW BAW WEEK-END. by Mrs. E.
Lyndon.

Actually it is not after completing a journey into foreign fields as this was that we should be writing about the plants of the area. It would be better far to have done it beforehand. Then we should have known just what we might see and be on the lookout for it and perhaps be able to identify it on sight. Since coming home I have done some considerable swotting up on the plants of the Alpine areas, and am feeling somewhat frustrated that I didn't look for this or that. The things we saw were delightful, but there were many equally interesting that were probably passed by. After all, we seemed to make the most of the afternoon and the morning that we spent on the plateau.

Study of the mosses is perhaps a specialist's job, as there is as yet no popular handbook dealing with such a complex subject. However a keen amateur can soon pick up a little knowledge of at least the commoner species. To the casual observer all sphagnum bogs look alike, but there are strikingly different forms amongst the plants. There is some confusion in the writings of early botanists in this field. Mr. Willis, writing in the Vic. Nat. (Vol. 69. June 1962) endeavours to straighten out some of these tangles. The genus is represented throughout the world in cool moist climates. They are the turf and peat-formers of Ireland and other vast tracts in the northern hemisphere. Mr. Willis remarks that all four of the Victorian species may be collected at the Latrobe-Little Yarra divide near Powelltown, surely the richest centre of Sphagnum development in this State.

The Clybmosses are dealt with in the Fern Book, published by the F.N.C.V., an absolute 'must' for everyone interested in our beautiful fern flora. They are a group of plants with true leaves and with the spore cases situated in the axils of the leaves or bracts in the form of a spike or club. In Lycopodium the sporecases are amongst the upper stem leaves or in a spike with a leafy stalk. On Baw Baw we saw two kinds. L. selago, the Fir Clubmoss, looks just that, a real miniature fir tree, three or four inches in height, erect and closely packed with 'needles'. The other one was L. fastigiatum, the Mountain Clubmoss, much branched and more fernlike. I wonder if anyone recorded L. scariosum, the Spreading Clubmoss. A prostrate creeping kind, it is recorded in Victoria only in a few places about the Baw Baws and on the Bogong High Plains. Next time we must watch for it!

-- E.L. --

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LATROBE VALLEY FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1964.

Presented to the Annual General Meeting at Morwell High School,
24th February, 1965.

The Club has had a successful year in which its membership and activities both increased. We had a programme of well attended talks and excursions which could be described as the best yet. The Club's policy of promoting the establishment of nature reserves has brought some pleasing results.

Our contacts with the other Gippsland field naturalists' clubs have been through joint excursions at Glenaladale with the Bairnsdale F.N.C., at the Sale Common wild life reserve with the newly formed Sale F.N.C. It is to be hoped that these informal meetings in the field will continue. As the four "territories" overlap we have many areas of common interest.

Mr. Jim Peterson reports that the Library has grown a little this year and that he would be glad if more members would use the books which are kept at his home, 14 Barry Street, Morwell.

The present committee has completed its terms of two years. As president I would like to thank everyone for their support and to express the sincere thanks of members of the Club to the Secretary, Mr. Simon Belgraver, who has done most of the work. The editor of the newsletter, Mr. George Scanlon, deserves a special mention for a monthly publication which helps to keep the Club moving. We should also thank Miss Nancy Rossiter for her efficient organising of excursions, especially the wonderful trip to Wilson's Promontary.

Reserves

A great deal of progress is to be reported in this field. The Shire of Morwell have reserved 50 acres of bushland around Sayers Trig Point above Hernes Oak. The Traralgon South wildflower reserve has been extended eastward over five acres of bushland. It is permanently reserved by the Lands Department, under the Shire of Traralgon and a committee of management. The Boola Boola reserve of 150 acres of heathland on the Walhalla Road only needs boundary marks to be formally reserved by the Lands Department.

A carefully prepared case for reservation of Silcock's Hill between Morwell and Yinnar was presented to the Morwell Shire. Another good case was put to the City of Moe for a bushland reserve above the Edward Hunter swimming pool in Moe. We feel sure of success in both these efforts. At the South Cascades our Club is only one of several interested in the creek and its beautiful forest. However, we believe it is safe from damage.

In the Hazelwood arboretum of native trees and shrubs the original plan for planting proved to be too complicated when replacing the many seedlings which died. Looking at the brighter side, the trees and shrubs that are alive are doing very well, some flowered brilliantly in the spring. The joint committee of this Club and the Morwell Horticulture Society met several times at Mr. Bill Parson's home, and we thank him and his wife for their hospitality. In 1965 there will be a regular working bee at the arboretum on the second Saturday every month. The S.E.C. has given wholehearted support in supplying seedlings, cultivating, mowing and watering.

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The following information was obtained from a confidential source who has provided reliable information in the past.

The source has provided information regarding the activities of the [redacted] group, which is active in the [redacted] area.

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Bird Banding Group

Some enthusiastic bird observers with the Vice President, Mr. Frank Jones as leader have formed a bird banding group within the Club. After long negotiations licenses have been obtained from the appropriate government departments, some equipment has been supplied by C.S.I.R.O., and three mist nets have been purchased. A highly successful weekend camp was held at Stony Creek near Cowwarr in November in conjunction with bird banders of the Victorian Ornithological Research Group.

Meetings and Excursions

The formula to work out the dates of meetings is as follows:- the general meeting is on the fourth Wednesday; from 7.30 p.m. to 10 p.m. at Morwell High School; the committee meeting is on the second Monday before the fourth Wednesday at the home of one of the members; the excursion is on the Saturday after the fourth Wednesday, usually by private cars. There was no meeting in December and January, and there were extra excursions in September, October and November.

- January. Those who attended the excursions to the Bennison High Plains above Licola were delighted with the sub-alpine flora.
- February. After the annual meeting Mr.B.Sterkenberg showed his masterly films of birds and wild flowers in Holland. The excursion was to the Den of Nargun in the Glenaladale National Park with the Bairnsdale F.N.C.
- March The highlight of the year was the weekend at Wilson's Promontary National Park staying at Tidal River in a large, comfortable hut, and some families in caravans. We hope to have another excursion there. At the monthly meeting Mr.John Nicholas explained some of the mysteries of the microscope.
- April. Dr.A.P.Fisher discussed Victorian soils and soil conservation at the meeting.
- May. Miss Jean Galbraith with plants and Mr.Jack Courtenay with insects showed the techniques of preserving specimens for collections. The excursion to Healesville Sanctuary was our first bus trip. It was a great success.
- June. Mr.John Bechervaise thrilled a large audience with his sensitive perception of the beauty and grandure of Antarctica. We could have listened and watched all night. Mrs.Lynden's excursion was on fossils and ferns at Koonwarra.
- July Mr.Alan Coulson showed us the geology of the Latrobe Valley in a lecture and excursion, and Mr.John Nicholas followed up with printed notes.
- August Mr.Jim Peterson and Mr.Homan made an impressive contribution to the study of local orchids at the meeting. At the Sale Common the excursioners needed webbed feet themselves to deal with the floods. Mr.Frank Jones led the joint excursion of L.V. and Sale F.N.C. in a study of water birds.
- September Dr.L.H.Smith, Director of the National Parks Authority, not only captured our interest with the beauties of national parks but gave us a scholarly and lucid account of the development of lyrebirds tails. There were two excursions - Boola Boola and Erica, Mr.Ken Eldridge, and Dutson heathlands, Mr.Bob Auchterlonie.
- October Mr.V.Jernakoff talked of his experiences as director of the Harbin Museum in Manchuria. We resolved to help him start a Latrobe Valley Museum of National History. Again there were two excursions for wildflowers - McDonald's track, Mr.Bob Auchterlonie, and Labertouche with Warragul F.N.C.
- November The Field Naturalists Club of Victoria came up from Melbourne in force for their general excursion in the Tyers Gorge led by members of the L.V.F.N.C. Dr.J.Moore Andrew gave a talk on insects and led the Club on an insect hunt at Glenaladale National Park.
- In January 1965 there was another enjoyable weekend excursion this time at a ski lodge on Mt.Baw Baw to study sub-alpine wildflowers at their best.

K.G.Eldridge(President)

20/2/1965

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LATROBE VALLEY FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB.

March 1965.

Dear Fellow Field Naturalists,

This Newsletter commences the practice which it is hoped to follow in providing 'before' an excursion something of what is expected to be seen in the course of it. Miss Jean Galbraith has provided a list and description of some of the plants to be seen on the excursion to the South Cascade on Saturday 27th. March.

The Excursion Secretary, Miss N. Rossiter:

Excursion Saturday 27th. March. On this outing to South Cascade on the Thomson Valley Road, north of Erica, the enjoyment of the beautiful forest is to be combined with a working bee. Elsewhere in this Newsletter Miss Jean Galbraith describes the numerous species of trees and ferns etc. which may be found in this lovely spot.

The object of the working bee is the widening and extending of the track up the valley of the South Cascade River, and members are asked to provide themselves with some implements such as a mattock, axe or spade.

The times of departure and picking-up points will be;

Traralgon.	9 a.m.	Methodist Church (South side)
Morwell.	9 a.m.	Morwell Town Hall.
Yallourn.	9 a.m.	Yallourn Post Office.
Moe.	9 a.m.	Moe Post Office.
Tyers.	9.15 a.m.	Tyers Post Office.

All should meet at Parkers Corner, three miles out of Erica on the Thomson Valley Road at 10 a.m.. Those needing transport must make arrangements at least two days beforehand with:

Mr. K. Eldridge.	Traralgon 72503.
Mr. J. Peterson.	Morwell 42129.
Miss N. Rossiter.	Yallourn 52392.
Mr. E. Homann.	Moe 295 between 8.30 a.m. & 4.30 p.m.

The Plants of South Cascade by Miss Jean Galbraith:

Shade and moisture loving plants grow at South Cascade. Under a high canopy of Mountain Ash and Mountain White Gum the banks are shaded with Myrtle-beech (with small bright shiny leaves), and Sassafras with longer shining leaves (about 2"), silver underneath. The teeth on the edges of the beech leaves are blunt, on the Sassafras sharp.

Conspicuous along the track from the road is Mountain Correa with fairly large oval leaves (not toothed), brown on grey hairy underneath; Zieria with strong-smelling leaves composed of three long leaflets; and Elderberry Parrax with many more than three leaflets. Hazel Pomaderris with very wrinkled leaves; Musk Daisy-bush with rather large silver-backed saw-edged leaves with a fine tracery of veins above; Rough Coprosma with leaves that feel like sandpaper also grow there, and along the road edge there is Cascade Everlasting with veiny narrow silver-backed leaves about 1" long or less, and several species of Groundsel with yellow daisy flowers. The commonest is Forest Groundsel with many very small flowers.

Several species of Water-ferns grow in the shade. They have spore-bearing fronds quite unlike the normal fronds (except Gristle-fern which has two parallel ribbons of brown spores on the back of many normal leaflets). The commonest are Ray Water-fern with rounded segments; Hard Water-fern with stiff dark fronds, and Fishbone Water-fern which is not divided quite to the midrib. Kangaroo Fern with shiny strap-like or unevenly lobed leaves grows on logs, rocks or treefern trunks, and so does Finger Fern which is also strap-like but only one or two inches long. Two of the commonest ground-ferns are Mother Shield-fern with much divided fronds covered near the base with brown chaffy scales; and Batwing Fern with very small light (often bluish) green stems and fronds. The first have many rounded segments.

Myrtle-beech.	Nothofagus cunninghamii.
Sassafras.	Atherosperma moschata.
Mountaon Correa.	Correa lawrenciana.
Zieria.	Zieria smithii.
Elderberry Panax.	Tieghemopanax sambucifolius.
Hazel Pomaderris.	Pomaderris aspera.
Rough Coprosma.	Coprosma hirtella.
Cascade Everlast- ing.	Helichrycum secundiflorum.
Forest Groundsel.	Seneci. linearifolius.
Gristle Fern.	Blechnum cartilagineus.
Ray Water-Fern.	B. fluviatile.
Hard Water-fern.	B. procerum.
Fishbone Water- fern.	B. nudum.
Kangaroo Fern.	Phymatodes.
Fingerfern.	Grammitis billardiera.
Mother Shield Fern.	Polystichum proliferum.
Batswing Fern.	Histiopteris incisa.

An Apology! May I use this Newsletter to apologise to fellow members for misnaming a plant on the Erica excursion. The bright yellow-daisy that grows singly on a 4" - 8" stalk is Senecio pectinatus, Alpine Groundsel, not S. gregori, as I named it. It was sheer absent mindedness. I have no excuse.

Jean Galbraith.

An Appreciation from the Secretary to the Past President, Mr. Ken Eldridge.

As at the Annual Meeting the President in his Report thanked the members of his Committee for the work done for the Club, I would like to be given the opportunity of responding in this Newsletter to his remarks. Although our new President, Mr. Homann, most ably expressed his thanks of the Club to Ken for a job so well done, I as Secretary would like to add a few words.

I would like to thank Ken very much for the manner in which he introduced me to my work as Secretary of the Club and would also like to mention that on quite a number of occasions he did a lot of preparation for projects undertaken in his term as President.

The fact that I really enjoyed it so much to carry out the duties of secretary of the Club is for a great part due to Ken's leadership.

Simon Belgraver.

A note re trees and shrubs for the Hazelwood Arboretum.

Members who have suggestions for types of trees and-or shrubs suitable for planting at the Arboretum during the next Spring are requested to pass the names on to Miss Jean Galbraith.

Bird Banding: The March-May 1965 issue of that excellent publication "Victoria's Resources" has a most interesting article on bird banding by Pauline Reilly, a member of the V.R.O.G. In fact, the issue is "A Native Birds Issue", and should be read by all Field Nats.

Notes from the Meeting of the Executive Committee:

Recently the Executive has been considering the possibility of conducting meetings of the Club in other towns in the district. A suitable meeting place would be in the lecture room of the Yallourn Library, which is well equipped with screen and other amenities, and can be used up to 11 p.m.. The charge is 10/- per night.

Although the fourth Wednesday of the month is already booked, the first and 4th. Thursday, the 2nd. Friday, and the 3rd. Monday of each month are still available.

It is desired to discuss this matter at the General Meeting on the 23rd. March, and to give members of the Executive some indication of your wishes, it is requested that you fill in the slip at the

end of this Newsletter and hand it in at the Meeting or before if possible.

Correspondence included a letter from the A.P.M. regarding the reservation of Overay's Block at South Traralgon. Outward letters included one to the Moe City Council providing a list of trees and wild-flowers at present growing at the Edward Hunter Pool area in Moe, and one to the F.N.C.V. asking for a reconsideration of its decision on the introduction of car stickers.

Boola Reserve. Final arrangements were made for the placing of marker posts around the Boola Boola Reserve and the Minister of Lands is to be approached about the erection of signs indicating the Reserve.

It has been suggested that some of the Club funds might be used for Club projects, and Mr. Jernakov is to prepare a report on these lines.

The next Meeting of the Executive will be held on the 12th. April at the home of Mr. & Mrs. E. McElroy.

S. Belgraver.

The Mt. Erica Excursion-"The Mushroom Rocks", by the Editor:

The group of rocks on the slopes of Mt. Erica, popularly known as the "Mushroom Rocks", was chosen as a base camp for rest and lunch before attempting the final assault on the summit (without aid of Sherpas). Rested and refreshed the party then commenced the long climb with Dr. J. Moore Andrew, wearing a "bare" minimum of clothing, in the van.

The writer elected to remain at the rocks and spent the time before the party's return wandering among and climbing some of the more easily climbed of the many shaped rocks, which bear something of the appearance of a giant child's discarded playthings.

These eroded, broken, toppled rocks are the visible surface remnants here of a huge granitic mass which extends over a large area. The granite is said to have been intruded at some time no later than the Palaeozoic Era, and is therefore of great age. The history of this area, as of that of the whole of the eastern part of Australia, is a complex one, consisting of intermittent earth movements of varying intensity, volcanic eruptions, local and general, from before the Permian until the end of the Tertiary, probably during the Pliocene Epoch, about 12 million years ago, when the "Kosciusko Uplift" took place. Coincidental with this uplift - a long process of fluctuating tempo - erosion was proceeding, to dissect the high plains, carving out deep valleys, and removing the heavy cover from the underlying granite, thus exposing this massive rock itself to the processes of decomposition and removal.

The "Mushroom Rocks" are of great interest, as are the many other interesting examples of uncovered granites in Victoria. Among the more spectacular, in the writer's experience, are those of Mt. Buffalo, Mt. Stanley near Myrtleford, and at Beechworth. Outside the comparatively narrow confines of Victoria, those who have travelled the road between Alice Springs and Darwin must have vivid recollections of the "Devil's Marbles", south of Tennant Creek - a sight never to be forgotten.

Today the bitumen road skirts the edges of the large plain on which the massive granite boulders appear scattered, and the traveller does not now obtain the full impact of their immensity as before. During the 1930's, when I first saw them, the track wandered more easterly between and around the rocks which lay in fantastic shapes wherever one looked - some balanced precariously on larger or smaller rocks, others taking on the seemingly recognisable shapes and features of individuals. One rock, above the roadway, was given during the war years a stick which became a cigar to complete the image of Churchill - it is still widely known as the "Churchill Rock". Seen later, on several occasions, from the air, the extensive plain had the appearance of a science fiction illustration depicting part of the moon's surface.

As hard as granite! But hard though granite undoubtedly is - it is not consistent in its weathering - some granites being highly resistant, while others (or the same granites in different circumstances) may decompose rapidly, and be carried away by rain and stream.

The "Mushroom Rocks" clearly demonstrate the fact that even the hardest of rocks can be assailed by the elements and be eventually removed by the unremitting processes of weathering. The "Devil's Marbles" provide an example of erosion over an incomprehensibly long period of time having almost completed the process of reducing mountains to a plain little above sea level with, comparatively, a few pebbles remaining. At the "Mushroom Rocks" there is still a long way to go, but one can almost see erosion in operation and the large (relatively) fragments of rock all show evidence of recent 'exfoliation' and other forms of weathering.

The highest climbable rocks which afford a broad view of the ranges to the East and part of the Great Valley of Victoria to the South, are all pieces of rocks which have fallen as strips from larger rocks or from each other. Heating and sudden cooling, frost and rain, other climatic variations, chemical action, acting individually and collectively on the mineral grains which constitute the granite, are among the processes which have operated for millions of years and are still continuing to destroy and remove the "everlasting hills".

The granite at Erica is a grey, but the colours vary from place to place and even, at times, between rocks in fairly close proximity to each other, from several shades of grey to pinks and reds. It is a beautiful rock whether "in the rough" or cut and dressed and used (to a much greater extent in the more leisurely past) for building stone and as statuary. The differences in the colours are due to differences in the colour of the felspar and the proportion of other minerals which the granite contains, and these variations and differences in mineral content are related to the depths at which the intruded granite magma cooled.

The most interesting study of the rocks at Mt. Erica was the effect of erosion. Erosion is one of the three great forces which play a part in effecting changes in the surface of the Earth - in producing new land surfaces. It is almost entirely a destructional process, it is continuous and inevitable. Paradoxically Man, a creative being, destroys much in his endeavours to create, and wherever we go on the excursions of the Club we see, unhappily, where the hand of Man has assisted and accelerated the natural processes of erosion - and destruction.

G.T.S.

Snippets from Mrs. Ellen Lyndon:

During mid-February we had been watching an unusual bird visitor. A Silver Gull had found our small land-locked waterhole, at least 20 miles inland from its normal habitat, the nearest sea beach. It was a young bird, showing a good deal of dark immature plumage and pale yellowish legs and bill. It spent part of its time walking round the edge of the water, sometimes in company with a White-necked Heron or two, but each evening it took to the wing and circled this 50 by 30 foot pool in typical Seagull flight, rising and dipping to the water for twenty minutes at a time. We had scattered bread upon the waters as a welcoming gesture. The dairy happens to overlook this small dam and we keep the field-glasses handy. There is usually something to look at. Herons, a few Plovers, an Egret or a Spoonbill and rarely, a pair of Ducks of one sort or another.

For the first time since I have lived in this district I noticed just before Christmas a pair of Satin Flycatchers. In company with Mr. & Mrs. Brewster we had gone to a patch of bushland in Nerrena, which lies just to the East of us. The female was first seen, an unusual bird to us, a plain colour with sides of neck and throat tinted orange-red. Later I came upon the male, which left no doubt as to identification. Back, wings and tail were a shining irridescent black, almost greenish-black. The throat was black. Under parts white. Something of Willy Wagtail colouring but more solidly built and, in this one at least, of more staid demeanour.

E.L.

Contributions are required for the Newsletter, in order that it may be kept to the standard of previous issues. Regular contributors should not feel that they are monopolising space, and are asked to continue their valuable offerings. Other members of the Club are invited to write longer or shorter accounts of their experiences, or their views on any aspect of natural history which will be of interest to other members. This Newsletter is a co-operative effort, and its success so far has been due to the CO-OPERATION of a comparatively few busy, informed members. It is hoped to widen and increase the number of contributors and the scope of the articles presented. Contributions may be sent direct to the Editor at the address below, or handed to the Secretary or other member of the Executive.

President:

Mr. E. Homann,
84 Hennessey Street,
Moe.

Editor:

G.T. Scanlan,
L.V.C. Hospital,
YALLOURN.

Secretary:

Mr. S. Belgraver,
179 Lloyd Street,
MOE.

Change of Meeting Place to the Yallourn Library.

Are you in favour of changing the Meeting place to
the Yallourn Public Library Building?.

Yes/No.

(Please cross out as applicable)

What are the most suitable nights for your attendance
at Meetings at the suggested change of venue?

(Please cross out the unsuitable nights)

1st. Thursday.

3rd. Monday.

2nd. Friday.

4th. Thursday.

and hand in at the next Meeting or to the Secretary.

6

Name of Member

LATROBE VALLEY FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB.

TO PROTECT AND ENJOY.

Monthly Newsletter No. 17.

April 1965.

Dear Fellow Field Naturalists,

The appeal in the March Newsletter for contributions met with a most gratifying response, and those which it has been possible to include within the limits of our space provide variety and will be read, I am sure, with interest, enjoyment and profit. Others will be used in future Newsletters together with what is hoped will be a regular supply of articles from members.

The Next Excursion:

Information regarding the next excursion will be found on the last sheet of the Newsletter, together with notes on the deliberations of the Executive Committee at its last meeting.

The article that follows, by Mrs. Lyndon, will provide members with an idea of what may be seen on the excursion, and in her words:- "These offerings are intended to put people in the right mind for the forthcoming excursion to the coast. We are prospecting all the shores for shells, so far without success - we need some rough windy storms ..."

A VISIT TO SANDY POINT by Mrs. Ellen Lyndon.

The tip of the long line of dunes that fringes Waratah Bay to the east is known as Sandy Point. It lies opposite Yanakie across Shallow Inlet and the site of the original Yanakie homestead, still marked by old cypress trees, is visible across the narrow strait. I believe that early visitors to Wilson's Promontory used to ride around this beach at low tide, crossing the narrow water channel on their way to Darby River. On Sandy Point today the subdividers have been busy and a planned estate of holiday home sites has been marked out and partly built upon. Across the Inlet the Yanakie shore is populated with stark new farm houses and dheds.

From the Point the wild coastline of the Promontory with its bald off-shore islets makes a picturesque backdrop for the long rollers that beat up the bay and break on the Waratah beach. There must be extensive shell beds in the bay, for some years ago after severe storms we found the beach littered with a beautiful variety of large shells, some still containing the live animals. This week, however, as on other visits, there were no shells of any kind.

At low tide Shallow Inlet shrinks considerably. Above high water mark the dunes are loose and on the move, a veritable Sahara of dazzling golden sand, sculptured by wind action into deep valleys and overhangong cornices like a snowfield. Further back, on the Inlet side, a long curve of sturdy dune vegetation shelters a little boat harbour, a peaceful and pretty spot viewed from the top of the dunes. Although Sandy Point is still Crown Land the gravel road that terminates at the cattle grid continues for some distance as a rough track through the bush, with the usual mysterious 'Bait' and 'Private Property' notices decorating the gateways of hidden shacks.

The dune vegetation is the usual association of Spinifex, Spinach and Sea Rocket, with Thistle and Purple Groundsel on the sea front, backed by the Coast Wattle, Teatree, and Everlasting, Clematis and Sword Sedge, with Coast Banksia, Sweet Bursaria, and the Drooping She-oak increasing in size on the flats. The Inlet shores and odd marshy depressions support a varied salt-marsh flora. There is a rich reward of orchids to be found in the humus-enriched sand at the proper seasons.

It was a long trek from Fish Creek by a somewhat soul-shattering after-the-holidays loose gravel road, but travelling on a weekday we had the land to ourselves with tide and sunshine just right. Over toward Yanakie could be seen a large flock of several hundred Swans. Huge Pacific Gulls, in adult and immature plumage, together with several kinds of Cormorants sat about the sandbanks, and Spurwing Plovers called. The Silver Gulls, well versed in begging, surrounded us at lunchtime.

Five Red-capped Dotterels foraged at the waters edge and exhibited their remarkable fleetness of foot as they bowled along ahead of us like balls of fluff blown before the wind. We were able to drive along the hard sand of the Inlet shore and marvel at how little notice is taken of a vehicle by the wild things. They show no fear and we were able to approach birds quite closely, or to stop and let them work up alongside. A pair of Sandpipers were thus approached, - largish birds with white eyebrows over straight black bills - pale below and dark grey on the back. White line along the folded wings, shrill musical whistle. To me, rather rusty on my shore birds now, the written and visual evidence added up to the Common Sandpiper. (Observers! do not be misled by this word 'common'. It invariably means 'really rather rare'. The Common Sandpiper is not often recorded in the South.

A flashing flock of silvery small fry out on the flats gradually moved closer in until they were feeding alongside our windows. Dotterel-like at first glance, but their large numbers, closely knit in flight, and their feeding habits, were different. These were the smallest of our visiting waders, the Little or Red-necked Stints, arriving about September and departing about March. Michael Sharland, in his 'Tasmanian Birds', describes them perfectly:- "A pale little creature ... could be mistaken for the Red-capped Dotterel if not studied closely... When disturbed the Little Stint flies swiftly in close formation, twisting and turning to reveal clear white body and underwings. Small flocks sometimes remain through winter".

Above us, against high white cumulus cloud banks, a pair of eagles soared effortlessly, neither Wedgetails nor Seas Eagles, but with something of the underneath colouring of a Swamp Harrier. I would have expected these to be Whistling Eagles as this bird is a scavenger of the beaches, but the silhouette and undermarkings suggested the Little Eagle, a bird with a liking for more inland regions. I had ample time to observe them through the glasses, so it is the Little Eagle that I recorded as they circled away across the plains of Yanakie toward the mountains of the Promontory. The Bird Observers' Club has published several excellent recognition booklets which cost very little and are a great help to the amateur observer. Field Guide to the Waders (Condon & McGill), and Field Guide to the Hawks of Australia (Condon). Both contain clear drawings of the birds in flight and at rest, with colour markings well shown, together with comprehensive text.

And botanically! As we pass through the heathlands of the coastal plain after this long dry spell the vegetation looks dry and lifeless and quite without colour. A closer examination and a forage around reveals many small flowers. The autumn orchid Parsons Bands pricks its little white ears from sheltered spots among the bracken. Fairies Aprons are already making drifts of dainty colour in the wet peaty places. There are a few flowers left on Viminaria, the Golden Spray. The Twiggy-Daisy-bush (*O. ramulosa*), is never quite without blossom, and some bushes are at their best just now. The prostrate Lobelia and Pratia join their efforts to colour the road banks, and a little yellow Swamp Goodenia is making a brave show. Melaleuca squarrosa is flaunting a few creamy brushes, and the Dodder, threaded through it like fine green wire, is dotted with clusters of little white beads. Several spiny Hakeas are flowering, the Silky Hakea with white flowers, and *H. nodosa* with softer foliage and creamy yellow flowers. The dwarf Banksias are producing their delicate greenish cones, and the fine-leaf Elderberry Panax is decked with pinkish dotted translucent berries. There are Pink and White Heath sikes and Correa, and an odd flower on the Pale Wedge-pea. One single bloom on the Prickly Guinea-flower, and some Tetratheca, and plenty of bloom on Hop Goodenia. The Pink Centuary can always be found somewhere. There are Water Buttons around the swamp, and a slender mauve Daisy amongst the rushes that reads like *Brachycome parvula* (?). Each week there is something new to be found as a flower hunter follows the wallaby tracks where the

Brown Stringybarks are dripping with honey flowers.

--- D. Lyndon. ---

SOME BOTANICAL OBSERVATIONS ON THE FEBRUARY EXCURSION
TO MOUNT ERICA by Mr. D.G. Marshall.

This excursion was held on a glorious autumn day, being neither too hot nor too cold. The only ones feeling the strain of climbing were those eager beavers who carried considerable packs of gear. Fortunately, most of the time spent in ascending Mt. Erica was spent botanizing as we steadily climbed. Ample time was afforded as we made a new find, thereby giving us breathing space.

The trip by road reminded me of our trip of over three years ago. How the road has changed! Not only was the road very rough, but it was also very unsightly off the roadside. Today, the climb by road can be accomplished in comfortable ease, and the natural beauty enjoyed, for the roadside shrubbery has regrown.

After having our morning cup of tea, we began our ascent to the Mushroom Rocks. On the way we observed the two *Senecios* - namely *S. linearifolia* and *S. velleoides*. For many of us the sight of *Leptospermum* in flower was a new pleasure. When we reached the Mushroom Rocks, we fortified ourselves by having dinner in readiness for the climb on to the plateau. As we steadily climbed, we noticed *Oxylobium elliptica*, as well as occasional specimens of Baw Baw Berry (*Wittsteinia vaccinacea*) in fruit.

It wasn't long before our orchid enthusiasts started to come to the fore as they discovered *Chiloglottis cornuta* and two Leek Orchids growing in association with one another - namely *Prasophyllum alpina* and *P. suttonii*.

Of all the plants seen the most numerous were the members of the *Compositae* family (daisies). Those that were seen in flower, that is, apart from the *Senecios* already noted, were *Olearia phlogopappa*, *O. floribunda*, *Podolepis robusta*, *Calmisia longifolia*, *Craspedia uniflora*, and a *Brachycome* sp.

Arriving at the Sphagnum bogs, we were pleased to see *Thelymitra venosa* (Veined Sun-orchid) and many more samples of the two Leek Orchids already mentioned. The Sphagnum bogs were unusually dry, but the plant life was still flourishing. Incidentally we were promised a very refreshing drink from the bogs on reaching the top - perhaps that kept some of us still trudging wearily onwards. The plants of *Callistemon sieberi*, growing in exposed positions were not in flower, nor was there evidence of flowering in previous years, for no seed had set. However, those growing amongst the Snow Gums were in flower with lemon to yellow coloured bottlebrushes and evidence of many years of seed boxes. The other delightful plants seen were the dwarf *Euphrasia antarctica* and *Gentianella diemenica*.

The most plentiful species of plant was undoubtedly the Grass Trigger Plant (*Stylidium graminifolium*). Specimens varied in colour, height and plentifulness at different levels, and depending on situations of growth. Thickets of *Richea continentis* provided an awkward barrier at times, which we had to circumvent. The two rarest plants seen on the day were the Wheel Heath (*Trochocarpa clarkii*) and the Baw Baw Berry, both of which are indigenous to the Baw Baws only, apart from an isolated occurrence of Baw Baw Berry on Mt. Donna Buang.

Two forms of the Mountain Heath-Myrtle (*Baeckea gunniana*) were noted in flower - the normal thin-leaved as well as the broad-leaved form. *Pultanea muellerii* was the most common plant. In sheltered places it grew into well established plants, whereas in exposed conditions it trailed close to the ground. A group of plants, overlooked so far, are the representatives of the *Liliaceae* family - such as the Tasman Flax lily (*Dianella tasmanica*), with its bright blue berries, Branching Grass-flag (which had just finished flowering), and the *Astelia* (*Astelia alipina*) with its bright red berries.

No doubt many more plants could be listed, especially the non-flowering species at the time of the excursion, together with plants from lower climes. In closing, allow me to reflect on a thought that has to be resolved with more finality, and that is in respect to the picking of specimens on excursions. In the past, it has been Club policy not to pick specimens on excursions. But, with the increase in size of excursions, together with the fact that there are extra trippers, many and varied types of specimens were picked. WE NEED A FIRMER POLICY :

The above discussion presents an excellent opportunity to remind the Club of what happened to a patch of Beardless-bearded Orchids - probably the rarest of all our Victorian Orchids. The known patch at the time was zealously guarded by one person, who made the fatal mistake of making yearly visits to the site and taking a specimen each time - with the result that they were completely wiped out and lost. Since its disappearance from one of the two known patches, this particularly rare orchid has been found locally. So let us guard it with care !

--- D.G. Marshall. ---

NOTES ON THE GENERAL MEETING 24th. March by S. Belgraver.

Holiday reminiscences was the subject of our first members' night, in which three of our members participated. Mrs. Kinniburgh was the first speaker, and told us the fascinating story of the Marimo, which grows in Lake Akam in Japan. Her short talk too on the Ammonitis or 'Seroent Stones' was much appreciated.

Mr. Graham Marshall, who in the past was the Secretary of the Bendigo F.N.C., told us of the activities of that Club, at their meetings and the field work that was done, especially in compiling lists of plants growing in the district. His advice about keeping the discussion on the business part of meetings to a minimum, was appreciated.

During her holidays Miss Betty Kemp toured the Snowy Mountains, and in her talk stressed the importance of the work the Snowy Mountains Authority is doing to prevent soil erosion, so important in a water catchment area, with enormous storage reservoirs. This was a most interesting talk.

Looking back on this members' night it is agreed that it was most successful. Time was not sufficient for all the members who were prepared to contribute to the evening, but the Secretary hopes to arrange for further nights of this kind.

Hazelwood Arboretum:

The 1965 inventory of surviving plants has been completed and there were found to be 712 trees alive. These include 133 different species. It is hoped that the regular monthly working bees on the second Saturday in every month will ensure that the trees are kept weeded and properly cared for. A visitor from Melbourne, who was taken to view the Arboretum recently, was delighted with the whole project, and expressed the opinion that it would show place in the future.

--- S. Belgraver - Secretary. ---

A STRANGER IN THE TARWIN. by Mrs. E.P. Brewster of Nerrena.

In mid-February two young boys fishing at Koonwarra were most startled to find a SAL in the river - thirty five river miles inland from the sea. When they recovered from their initial fright, they followed it upstream for some distance, reporting that it snorted loudly and blew through its nose when they threw a stick at it. During the next few days there were reports of sightings from various farms upstream, and of search parties hunting for it - unsuccessfully.

It was last sighted by our neighbours who saw it sleeping on the bank when he went to move his irrigation pipes at 6.30 p.m.. At

first sight he took it to be one of the yearling black cattle from across the river. It was not at all disturbed by his presence at the top of the bank, and lay there for a full two hours. Finally he saw it take to the water and move upstream, submerging and reappearing. Where there was a clear expanse of water it moved speedily, and where there were snags over which it had to clamber he kept abreast of it and thus kept it in sight for half a mile.

He describes it as having a brown face and chest with a very dark back. When sleeping on the bank with its tail curled about it, it appeared to be about four feet long, but when stretched out swimming it seemed six feet long. He estimated it to be about 250 lbs. in weight - the comparable weight for a pig with similar shoulder size !

A large seal has also been found dead by the side of the river near Tarwin. There are no apparent marks of foul play. Either it was a very old one or the diet in our river was too mush for it.

--- E.P. Brewster. ---

Mrs. Brewster added a post script referring to a comment in the March issue of "Walkabout" on wandering seals in inland waters. The writer suggests that these seals, which have been known to swim upwards of 1000 miles from salt water, gave rise to the Bunyip myth. (Ed).

SALAMANDERS, OR GIPPSLAND CROCODILES by Mrs. Mary Hague
of Cowarr.

When the bird-banding group visited Stoney Creek I showed two of the members the Salamanders. I was asked by Mr. F. Jones to write about them..... It may be interesting to members of the L.V.F.N.C. (And it undoubtedly is of great interest (Ed).

When first we came to live on this farm situated on the River Thomson, about half-a-mile from the rocky gorge, I, being a nature lover, walked down to the river. I heard plop!, plop!, as some small animal dived into the water and swam away. I then kept a lookout, and discovered that the cause of the splash was a lizard-like creature resembling a tiny crocodile. I was told by a local resident that their name was Salamander, only found in East Gippsland Rivers. To me they are fascinating and real Australian creatures. A semi-aquatic lizard, the real name being *Physignathus lesuerii* - meaning thickjawed, and Le Suer being the zoologist who discovered it.

There is a Central Australian lizard of this family, and another in New South Wales which is tinged with red where the Gippsland Salamander is a greeny grey. These quaint reptiles can become three feet long, and swim like fish under water. They lie basking in the sun, motionless on the fallen logs - if disturbed they dive into the water. They are very good and quick climbers on rocks and fallen trees. Being, at first sight, of rather gruesome appearance, they have not much chance of being treated well. Ignorant people scream, and fancy they have been bitten. I find them harmless, tame, and even beautiful as the sun brings out the different tones of grey, brown, orange and green of their skin. I can get to within two to three feet of them when they are basking.

"Sally's" go into a semi-dormant condition during the winter, but if warm sun appears, they will emerge from their hiding place to bask. In the dictionary Salamander is described as "a lizard-like animal, supposed to live in fire". The Gippsland Crocodile was seen by the regions earliest pioneers, but it was not until 1930 that the first photographs of the lizard were seen - these were taken by the Melbourne naturalist Charles Barrett, near Dargo. Using a noose on a long stick Barrett caught five specimens to show at a wild nature exhibition in Melbourne. Two of the lizards escaped in Dargo's main street. Barrett frantically tried to bag them, he said, - "Dargo had never seen such a moving picture!"

"Sally's" of the mountain and isolated streams are seldom seen, being timid, nevertheless they are famous in 'reptilian' circles with a three 'tiered' name - *Physignathus lesuerii howitti*. I admit that name means little to me, but I often stroll down to the river to see my salamanders - Mum, Dad, and steps and stairs stretched out, blinking sleepily, showing long clawed hind legs, and long strong tails. As they steadily look at me I creep nearer and nearer to them. It seems that they also are wondering what strange creature I am.

Anyone with the patience and interest to watch and discover their habits should find the Salamander a fascinating study.

--- Mary Hague ---

THE SPUR WING PLOVER-AN ELEGANT BIRD by Mr. R. Stevens.

I live at 60 Parkway, Yallourn, near the western end of the S.E.C. Nursery. Immediately to the south of the Nursery and extending for half a mile to the ovals, is a beautiful stretch of parkland which was originally mainly swamp. Early in January of this year, I was attracted by the familiar cry of plover in this area, and found that they were five in number. With the assistance of Mr. Belgraver (field glasses), and Neville Cayley (bird lore), the birds were readily identifiable as the Spur Wing Plover. They have been observed on many, many occasions, and quite often on the small island in the boating pond near the swimming pool, where they seemed to revel in their comparative security being disturbed there mainly by the dive bombing of the magpies to which they stand their ground in defiance and loudly voice their objections.

One late afternoon towards the end of February the familiar cry was heard quite close behind the nursery, so my wife and I made yet another stealthy approach. Four plover were observed some 70 yards away, and we were wondering what could have happened to the fifth when, from the eastward came five plover in low and tight formation flying fast. The four hastily and noisily took off to the westward. After much confused flight and some individual sorties the five returned in triumph to their stamping ground, wheeled gracefully and alighted close to the point from where the intruders had been banished shortly before, presenting their white shirt fronts to the setting sun.

As I remarked earlier, this may be a commonplace observation to some members, but to me it was a classic. In the 20 years during which I have lived at this spot I have not before been aware of the continued presence of plover. Now at the end of March the five are still there! Some questions arise: (1) Are they a family whose chicks have reached adulthood and have remained in company with the parents until perhaps the approach of the next nesting season which, according to Cayley, is July to January? (2) Is it common practice with the spur wing to assume ownership of a territory and ban their own kind from it whilst suffering the presence of other ground feeders like magpies and peewits? (3) As they fly about so much at night, when do they sleep and where? (4) Who is this chap Stephens whose name appears among the spur wings' unpronounceables in Cayley's book?

*--- Reg Stevens ---

President:

Mr. E. Homann,
84 Hennessey Street,
MOE.

Secretary:

Mr. S. Belgraver,
179 Lloyd Street,
MOE.

Editor:

Geo. T. Scanlan,
L.V.C. Hospital,
YALLOURN.

In view of the fact that the 2nd Friday of the month would give our Honorary Editor and Publisher more time to publish the newsletter, and also this evening is more convenient to members, it was decided to conduct the Executive Meetings on the 2nd Friday of the month.

Correspondence:

Mr. Jim Peterson will approach Dr. G.N. Christensen, convener of Photoflora 1965, regarding the exhibition next year.

An invitation for a junior member of our Club to attend the Dinner of the Rotary Club of Morwell during Boys and Girls Week was dealt with.

Finance:

A number of financial matters were finalised:

1. £2.5.0 will be paid for Mr. Willis' Handbook.
2. Our Librarian, Mr. Jim Peterson, received £2 for the binding of magazines.
3. The Geelong F.N.C. will receive 10/- for subscription to its newsletter.
4. Miss Galbraith was authorised to pay the accounts of Mr. Cadmore and Mr. Kane for seedlings bought for the Hazelwood Arboretum. (This money will come from the special account regarding the Arboretum and half of it will be paid by the Morwell Horticultural Society.)

General Business:

Mr. Jernakov will be approached concerning a Hobbies Exhibition which will be held on 28th - 29th May, 1965 by the Morwell Rotary Club.

A Sub-committee, consisting of Messrs. Homann, Jernakov and Peterson, will contact Mr. Hughes in connection with his offer to make available some space at the Kernes Oak P.O. for the establishment of the nucleus of a museum in the Latrobe Valley.

The matter of meeting date and place was discussed - see separate notes in the newsletter.

At the General Meeting on 28th April Mr. G. Marshall hopes to introduce the subject, Shells and Sea Life, which we will study on our excursion to Walkerville on Saturday, 1st May (for details see the notes of the Excursion Secretary).

As our meetings are now finalised, the 1965 programme is ready for printing and appears on a separate sheet.

The next meeting of the Executive will be held on 14th May at the home of Miss Rossiter.

EXCURSION - SATURDAY, 1ST MAY

Mr. G. Marshall is to lead this excursion to the South Gippsland coast in the vicinity of Walkerville. There we will look for shells and learn something of the animals which made them and lived in them. Our Gippsland members are doing reconnaissance to find the locality where shells are likely to be most plentiful.

As usual, those needing transport must notify any one of the following at least two days before the excursion:

Traralgon:	Mr. K. Eldridge	Traralgon 7.2503.
Morwell:	Mr. J. Peterson	Morwell 4.2129.
Yallourn:	Miss N. Rossiter	Yallourn 5.2392.
Moe:	Mr. E. Homann	Moe 295 between 8.30 a.m. & 4.30 p.m.

Picking up times will be:

Traralgon:	8.15 a.m.	Methodist Church, south side of Highway.
Morwell:	8.30 a.m.	Town Hall.
Yallourn:	8.15 a.m.	Post Office.
Moe:	8.15 a.m.	Post Office.

All cars are to meet at the junction of the Dumbalk - Meenyan Road with the South Gippsland Highway at 10 a.m., when we hope to see all our South Gippsland

LATROBE VALLEY FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB

to promote an interest in native plants, birds
insects, geology and marine life, and to assist in the
management of nature reserves.

General meetings are held on the fourth Wednesday of
each month at the Morwell High School, starting at 7.30 p.m.
At the business meeting, a talk is given, usually
illustrated by slides or movies.

A field excursion is held on the following weekend.

Annual contribution is 10/- for a single person,
15/- for juniors and 15/- for a family.

Persons willing to give you more
information about our activities:-

- Mr. E.H. Homann, 84 Hennessy St. Phone: Moe 295
between 8.30 a.m. and 4.30 p.m.
Mr. J.M. Peterson, 14 Barry St. Phone: 4.2129.
Mr. K.G. Eldridge, 39 LaFayette St. " 7.2503.
Mr. G.T. Scanlan, C/o Hospital. " 5.2111.

President:
Mr. E.H. Homann,
84 Hennessy Street,
Moe.

Excursion to the Fox Plateau: Alpine Flora.

Working Bee, Hazelwood Arboretum.
and Meeting.

Meeting: Mr. F.E. Jones - Birds.
Excursion to Mount Erica: Botany.

Working Bee, Hazelwood Arboretum.
Meeting: Mr. Lightbody - Birds.
Excursion to Mount Erica: Botany.

Working Bee, Hazelwood Arboretum.
Meeting: Mr. Graham Marshall - Shells and Sea Life.

Excursion to the Coast in the vicinity of Williamstown.
Leader: Mr. Graham Marshall - Shells and Sea Life.
Working Bee, Hazelwood Arboretum.
Meeting: Mr. Roberts - Water Birds.
Excursion to Dawd Swamp: Mr. Roberts - Water Birds.

Working Bee, Hazelwood Arboretum.
Meeting: Mr. John Nicholas - Ornithology.
Excursion to Cooper's Creek.
Leader: Mr. John Nicholas - Ornithology of the Plateau.

Working Bee, Hazelwood Arboretum.
Meeting: Mrs. E. Lyndon - Botany.
Excursion to Turton's Creek and/or Tams Valley and Bulga.
Leader: Mrs. E. Lyndon - Botany.

Working Bee, Hazelwood Arboretum.
Meeting: Mr. Hyatt - Native Study.
Excursion to Hazelwood Arboretum: Birds' Eggs and
and Bulga Park area.

Sept. 11 Working Bee, Hazelwood Arboretum.
22 Meeting: Miss Joan Galbraith - Western Australia.
25 Excursion to Cowarr - Boola Boola Road.
Leader: Miss Joan Galbraith - Wetlegs and W.

Oct. 27 Meeting: Mr. Ros. Garnet* - Wildflowers on W.
Promontory.
30 Excursion Weekend to Wilson's Promontory.
Leader: Mr. Ros. Garnet* - Wildflowers.

Nov. 19 Working Bee, Hazelwood Arboretum.
25 Meeting: Mr. Lightbody* - Birds.
27 Excursion to Look Sport: Birds.

Jan. Will be a Mountain trip to study Alpine Flora.
Destination to be discussed.

Feb. 12 Working Bee, Hazelwood Arboretum.
23 Meeting: Mr. Graham Pizzey - Penguins.
25 Excursion to Phillip Island: Penguins.

* Depending on reply.

If needing transport for any excursion, please
following at least two days before the excursion:

Traralgon:	Mr. K.G. Eldridge	Traralgon 7.2505
Morwell:	Mr. J.M. Peterson	Morwell 4.2129.
Yallourn:	Miss W.T. Roositer	Yallourn 5.2392.
Moe:	Mr. E.H. Homann	Moe 295 between 6 and 4.30

